

Vol.6 No.1 February 1997

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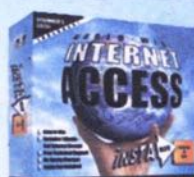
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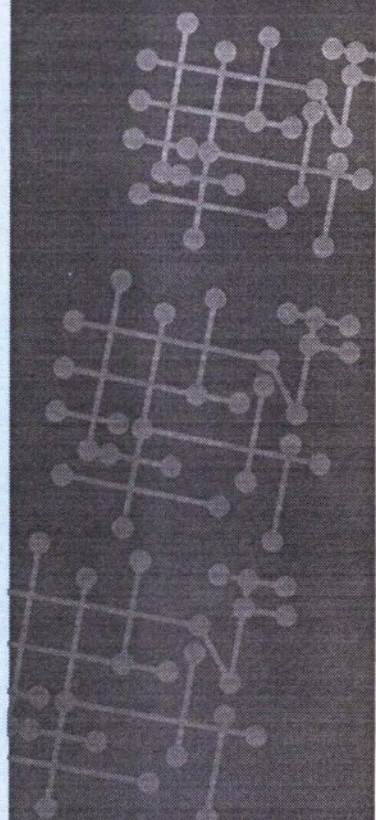
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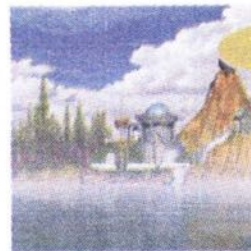
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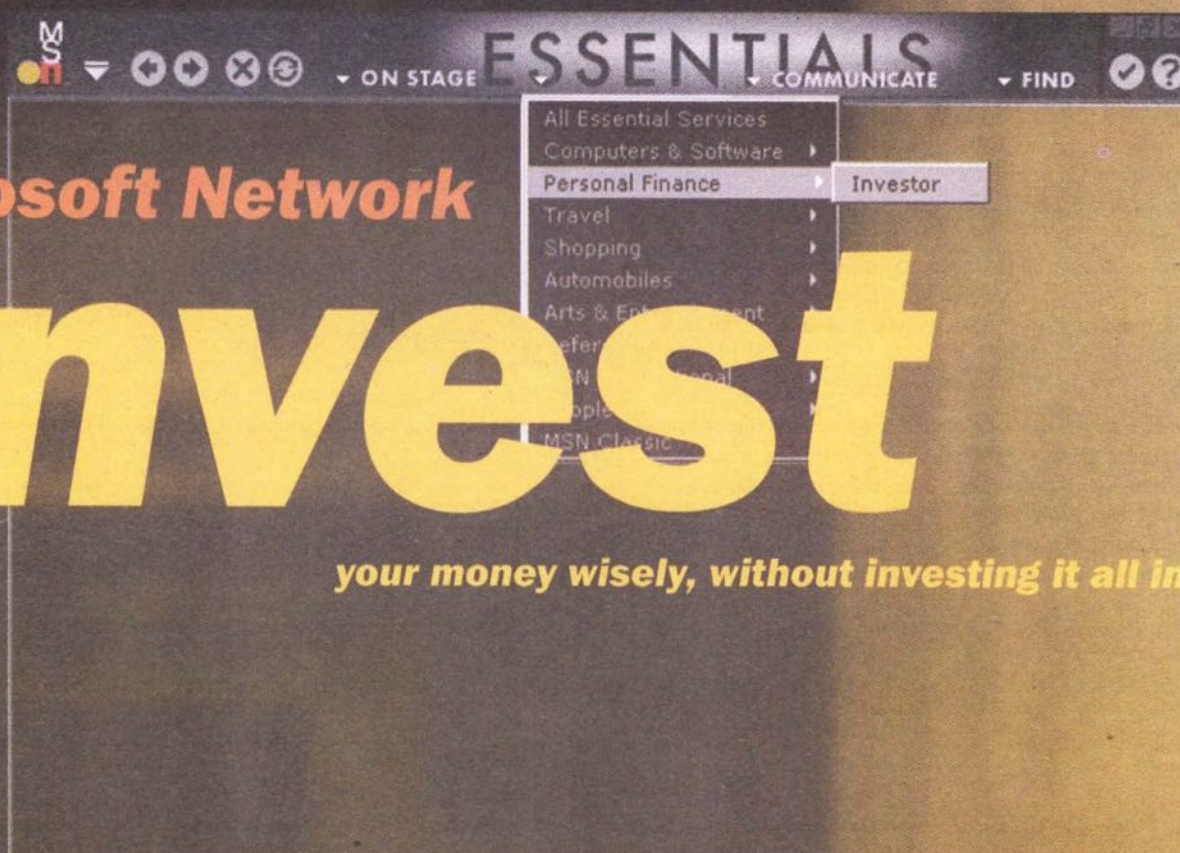
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# Jaded in cyberspace

l e t t e r f r o m t h e e d i t o r

# A

s we planned this issue, we reminisced about last February's cover story, "Love on the Net." Back then, everybody was intrigued by the concept of online relationships. A year later, many of us have grown tired of such stories. Been there, seen that—tell me something new about the Internet.

An increasing number of people are more familiar with life online, too. At the recent Internet World trade show, for example, one exhibitor said that a year ago people were crowding the booth asking, "What's a firewall?" This year, only a few select individuals showed up—and they all had erudite questions.

We've gotten to the stage where we know quite a bit about the online world, and it isn't as easy to thrill us. Rick Broadhead, co-author of the *Canadian Internet Handbook*, predicts that this will be the year of accountability for the Internet, and

that "companies are going to have to face the music."

Now that the honeymoon is over, we're beginning to pause and question what we're leaving behind, and whether we're headed in the right direction.

When it comes to online learning, it turns out certain university students have embraced the Internet to the point that they become wallflowers not only at social functions, but also throughout their university careers. Why go outside—at a recent seminar, the lecturer suggested participants check the Internet, not the library, for recommended supplementary reading.

And while I've never witnessed anyone staying up all night—night after night—playing board games like *Clue* or *Monopoly*, I have seen it with the electronic version of something as primitive as Solitaire. Is this a positive example of the use of cutting-edge technology?

Things are certainly a-changin', and they'll no doubt continue to do so. For the cover of this issue, we've chosen to give prominence to the question of what we're leaving behind. Maybe the past and the future can coexist. Time will tell.

## Gimme a boost

Back in the summer, I wrote about killing my car battery while running my laptop off the cigarette lighter. Since then, various readers have suggested alternative power sources—everything from solar panels to deep-cycle batteries and Honda portable generators.

The solar panel sounded like the ultimate solution, so I called up Keep It Simple Systems in Montana (<http://wildwestweb.com/>).



Armed with the Mercury II, a 1.13 kg unit just larger in size than my Macintosh PowerBook, with two panels that can output up to 26 Volts, I was ready to test.

Although weekend trips to the cottage came to a halt months ago, there was one weekend in late fall that I happened to be up north for 48 hours. The day was sunny, and when I placed the solar panel perpendicular to the impact of the sun's rays, the battery was in fact slowly charging. It was in no way a replacement for an external power source, however.

My next opportunity was a train trip to Montreal. I knew, however, that there was no way I would be able to place the panel in the correct angle when moving, and there was a chance the train windows would be tinted glass.

My next opportunity was during the Christmas holidays. The cottage location was perfect. All I lacked was sun.

When the sun finally did shine, I opened up the panel. This being around the time of the Winter Solstice, the sun was not too bright and the days were short. The panel did charge the battery—but only a tiny bit. The IBM laptop had similar results.

One night, we joked about lighting a million candles to gather up enough illumination. The manual, however, clearly states that "indoor lighting, unless it is very intense...will not produce sufficient energy." Too bad.

## See you next summer?

The best time to use a solar panel in Canada is during the summer months, when the days are, hopefully, sunny. You also need to be somewhere where you can move the panel around to track

the sun's rays. If you're heading up north and plan to work non-stop, without breaks, forget it, since the Mercury II needs quite a bit of time to recharge.

The best place for this panel is probably somewhere like Florida, Egypt, or Mexico—or, as the KISS brochure outlines, the Congo, where you really don't have any other choice.

As for myself, I'll use this panel on lazy summer afternoons when I have lots of time. For intense work—I'll stick to the car battery (carefully), and wait for cheap, humongous solar panels with more power.

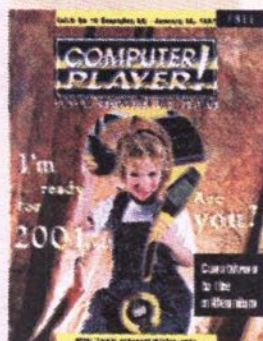
Enjoy the issue!

Māra Gulens

Editor@tcpon.com

## Your letters please

Letters on issues raised in the paper or general computer topics are welcome. Please be brief. We regret that we are unable to look up stories from past issues, suggest products, or solve all your computer problems. Only those with names and e-mail or snail-mail addresses will be published. Letters may be edited for space or content.



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*Canada Computes!*  
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## Can't get enough OS/2!

I want to complement you on your OS/2 sections. Kevin Linfield has done a good job and your articles seem balanced when it comes to operating systems. As a dedicated OS/2 shop, we look forward to every one of your editions, which are well read and well appreciated. Keep up the good work.

Best Wishes.

Robert Danvers, via the Internet

## Still a snail

I agree with all your comments on e-mail as a communications medium (December editorial) and have been through similar experiences. In the fall, I came across "More Than Words," a program that produces electronic greeting cards (you can find it at <http://kmmc.harvard.net/v5-dw902.htm>).

The program defeats the ability of e-mail to capture thoughts (mind bytes),

however, as it takes time to learn the program and produce a card. So this year my cards went via snail mail again.

Colin Carlsen

## Coworkers: More dangerous than hackers?

Re: "Big Brother Watches Us All" by David Rosen in the January 1997 issue.

While it is good to see the emphasis on privacy-related articles continue in your paper, you must be sure to provide proper context.

In David Rosen's aforementioned article, he states "Hackers can read any e-mail messages they want." This is true, but not an accurate reflection of who can read your e-mail. It is difficult for an intruder to first gain access and then read someone's e-mail, so there must be a reason for the intrusion (i.e., the mail's content).

It is far easier for any person with suf-

continued on page 7



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#### ABOUT THE COVER

This month's cover was designed by Jennifer Hanlon Scott & retouched in Photoshop 3.0. Composition & type were created in Adobe Illustrator 5.5. The background image of the Snakes & Ladders gameboard appears with permission from © Playtoy Industries.

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#### Letters...

continued from page 6

ficient access to the mail server to read users' mail than it is for a hacker to break in and do it. Perhaps Mr. Rosen should have said that because e-mail is stored as ASCII text, that anyone with access to either root or the console can read your mail. This includes system administrators

and computer operators as well as hackers. The only way to be sure that your e-mail is safe from intrusion is to use encryption, such as PGP. I hope more people learn and understand the importance of this privacy.

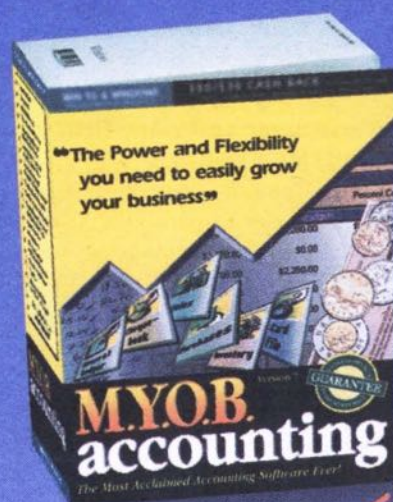
Richard Stride, via the Internet ♦

#### OOPS

The address and phone number printed for Internet Gateway Corp. on the inside front cover in our January issue were incorrect.

The correct information is: 889 West Pender Street, Suite 503, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V6C 3B2. (604) 654-6088. *Computer Player* apologizes for the error.

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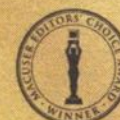
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# BC computer maker wins \$1.8 million sale



## The BC Files

Steve Bain

For NTS Computer Systems, the year is off to a banner beginning. The Maple Ridge com-

puter developer received an order worth nearly \$2 million last month for their portable clamshell-shaped "Flip" computer. This is the first order for their flagship product, which immediately went into production at the company's new Shannon, Ireland, production facility. The order is expected to be filled later this month.

The "Flip" is one of four of NTS's DreamWriter line of products, touted by the company as a low-cost computer appliance aimed at the education market. The tiny 8 by 11 by 1-inch advanced system hardware weighs just over two pounds, and is small and durable enough to brave transport in student knapsacks, with battery life to last more than a full day.

Built-in components include liquid quartz display, keyboard, 1.44 MB floppy drive, and a 9 MHz processor. For file storage, the system cleverly employs rewritable PCMCIA memory cards, each capable of holding up to 250 pages of text. The DreamWriter Flip also features cable connectivity and compatibility to Macintosh or Windows PC hardware through DreamLink, another of the company's products.

Software included with the DreamWriter Flip system is geared toward teaching students computer basics, and features pro-

grams for teaching typing skills and displaying accuracy results. Students can also use word-processing programs complete with document formatting, spell checking, grammar, and writing tools.

NTS also touts their product as an entry-level system to teach students the necessary computer basics used by more advanced desktop systems, by using the same file-naming conventions, file input/output procedures, and printing tools. Built-in organizer software also enables students to use calculator, address-book, and scheduling software, and comes with modem connectivity for e-mail and distance learners.

For more information on NTS Computer Systems or their products, visit the Web site at [http://canstock.com/Co\\_Promos/NTS/dream.html](http://canstock.com/Co_Promos/NTS/dream.html).

### Vancouver software firm connects American realtors

Last month, Vancouver-based Ancilla Technologies earned pole position to offer technology that will bring US real-estate agents using the Realty World Broker Network software into the 21st century. The company's customizable voice, fax, and data-communications software will be first in line to offer advanced phone-management tools

capable of running on personal computers in small office/home office (SOHO) settings.

Ancilla's software has such features as caller identification, text-to-speech conversion, remote paging, and voice-mail notification, as well as advanced voice-mail capabilities (including up to 9,000 individual mail boxes, music on hold, and hands-free dialing).

Established in 1989, the company has been developing computer telephony software specifically for the SOHO market. In keeping with the company mission, Ancilla's goal is to "expand communications capabilities beyond the office."

For more information on Ancilla Technologies Inc., or their software products, visit their Web site at <http://www.ancilla.com/> or call (604) 684-3118.

### Local PR firm goes strictly virtual

In a staggering move toward what they think will be a trend of the future, the public relations firm Hill & Knowlton has jolted the business community in Vancouver by closing their downtown offices in favour of a cyberspace presence. Instead of physical, corporate-style offices, employees will now work out of offices in their homes or at client sites.

Business experts say it's an extreme solution. *continued on page 9*

## CORRECTION

Due to a printing error, a recent advertisement for the SnapScan scanner and the StudioStar scanner appeared in The Computer Player! with suggested prices of \$389 and \$985. The prices quoted are not appropriate for the scanners in the Canadian market. We regret any inconvenience the error may have caused.

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IBM THINKPAD 365XD P-133/8MB/1.35GB/11.3" DSTN/6X CD ROM/WIN 95	\$4,680

IMPULSE NOTEBOOK P-120/16MB/1 GB/11.3" DSTN	\$3,050
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# Maz's Looney Love

• • By JUNE CAMPBELL • •

Question: What's multimedia, interactive, user-friendly, displays in full-colour resolution, and is located at "http://www.maziluv.bug?"

Answer: Maz's Looney Love on the Internet, playing until April 7th at Maz & Me's Comedy Revue Theatre at 2620 Shaughnessy St., Port Coquitlam.

It's revue theatre—Aussie style! As the poster reads, "Revue Theatre Restaurant—a True Blue Aussie Treat. Hook up to Maz's Mad Musical Modem and take a quick surf through Maz's Looney Love Net!"

Maz and Me's is the brain child of Australian born Marilyn (Maz) Gering (a true-blue Aussie sheila with experience!). After 15 years as a performing artist "down under," Maz acquired a Canadian husband and "was whisked off" to Vernon, BC, where she opened Maz and Me's. In 1988, Ms. Gering moved to Port Coquitlam "with her piano and her show." On January 1 of this year, Maz and Me's was bought by John Seiger, Maz's friend and former business manager, described affectionately in her cookbook as "the mongrel pommy bastard."

## Come on time, or else

Walk through the theatre doors and enter the Big Mainframe! You'll be greeted by riotous shouts from the "surfers" already seated (Warning! Don't come late). Next, you'll find that the strangely dressed servers burst into song, tell jokes, and make menu recommendations ("Don't eat the soup!").

After dinner is served (a choice of six entrees, including a vegetarian dish), the servers move up to the stage and the real performance begins. Maz's Looney Love on the Internet will amuse you, amaze you, possibly offend you, but never bore you! You don't have to be a NetHead to enjoy this performance...but if you do admit to knowing something about computers, be ready to be pointed out as "the Geek at the Front Table!"

As the evening of music, song, dance, impersonation, and skits progresses, you'll be impressed with the abilities of the talented cast: Mark Friebe, Sheila Sharma, Tony Deane, Andrea Gittens, Jon Lundquist, Randy Pierce, and musical director Wayne Usselman. But be warned—you could find yourself participating in the show. The audience sometimes becomes the cast; the cast becomes the audience (no need to worry—anyone wanting to simply sit back and watch will find that his or her wishes are graciously accommodated).

My recommendation: Don't miss it. It's fun, it's affordable (\$34 for dinner, show, and GST), and it's playing Wednesdays through Sundays, 7:00 PM to 11:30 PM. Phone (604) 942-2122 for reservations.

PS: Don't bother pointing Netscape Navigator to http://www.maziluv.bug/—it's not a real Web site! ♦

## BC computer maker wins ... continued from page 8

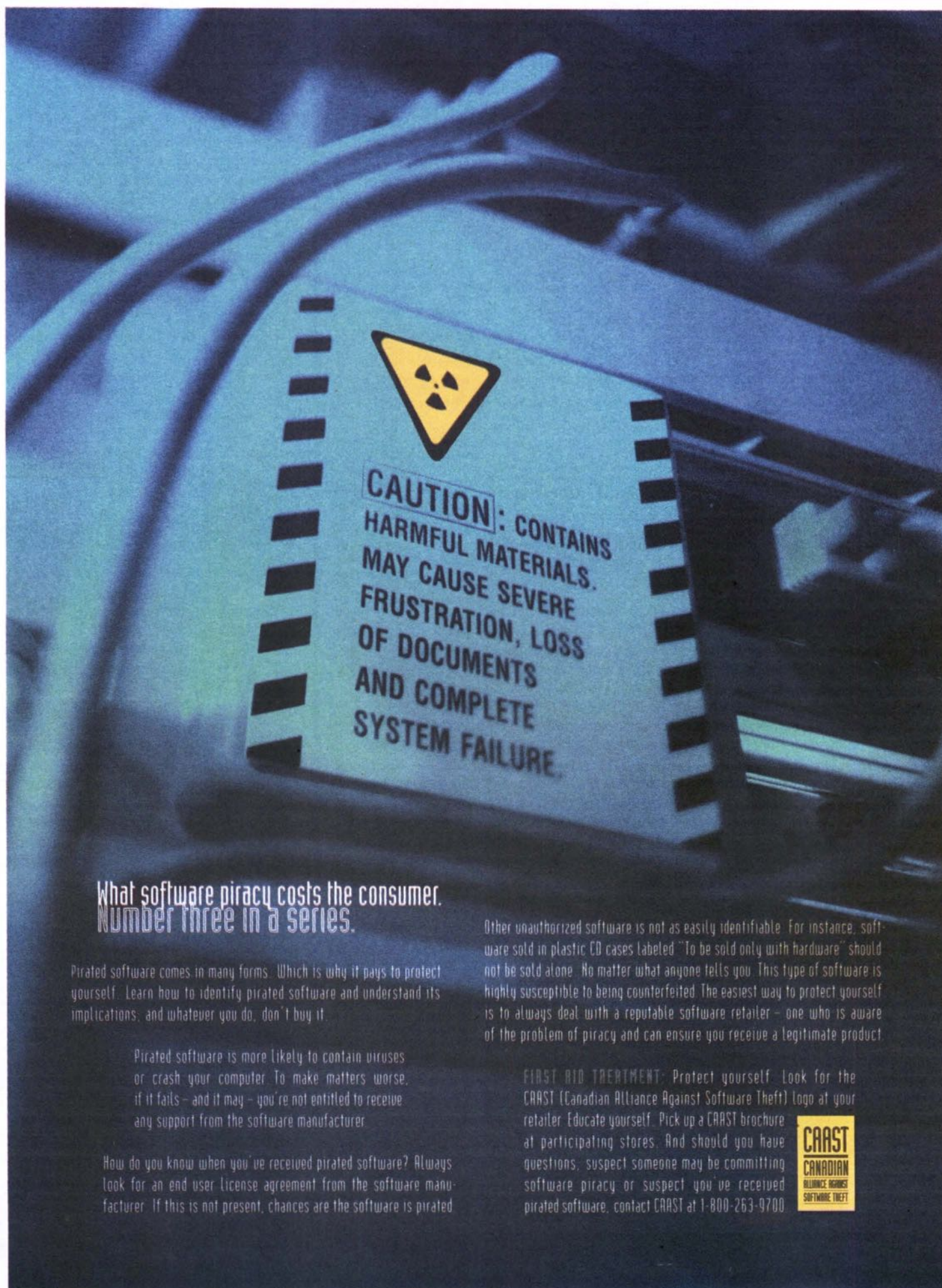
tion and works well for certain companies—but not all. Others say that through the Internet and other emerging technologies, virtual offices will pave the way for businesses to become more competitive in the future.

## BC sets pace for Canadian online use

Researchers tracking Internet industry trends say British Columbia is leading the way. A recently released report says that online-wired homes in Canada will total more than a million by summer, with BC accounting for nearly a quarter of those. The reason? BC rides the same high-technology wave that California does, and our comput-

er prices are among the lowest on the continent. BC is also home to more than 60 Internet service providers, up from 40 a year ago. Competition for the fast-growing online market is fierce.

Steve Bain is the Computer Player/Canada Computes western correspondent in Vancouver, Canada. Send news tips, questions, or comments to Steve@helix.net ♦



**What software piracy costs the consumer.  
Number three in a series.**


Pirated software comes in many forms. Which is why it pays to protect yourself. Learn how to identify pirated software and understand its implications, and whatever you do, don't buy it.

Pirated software is more likely to contain viruses or crash your computer. To make matters worse, if it fails—and it may—you're not entitled to receive any support from the software manufacturer.

How do you know when you've received pirated software? Always look for an end user license agreement from the software manufacturer. If this is not present, chances are the software is pirated.

Other unauthorized software is not as easily identifiable. For instance, software sold in plastic CD cases labeled "To be sold only with hardware" should not be sold alone. No matter what anyone tells you, this type of software is highly susceptible to being counterfeited. The easiest way to protect yourself is to always deal with a reputable software retailer—one who is aware of the problem of piracy and can ensure you receive a legitimate product.

**FIRST AID TREATMENT:** Protect yourself. Look for the CAAST (Canadian Alliance Against Software Theft) logo at your retailer. Educate yourself. Pick up a CAAST brochure at participating stores. And should you have questions, suspect someone may be committing software piracy or suspect you've received pirated software, contact CAAST at 1-800-263-9700.

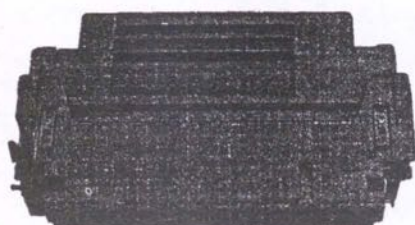




# Guess Which Cartridge Saved Our Customer \$70?



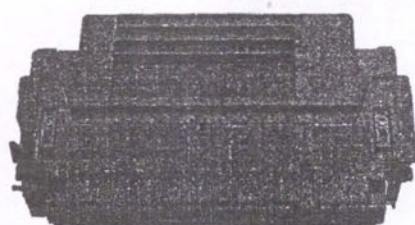
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## News

# New RSI treatment available

• • By PIPPA WYSONG • •

A machine that looks like a Mediaeval torture implement is the latest addition to the arsenal of treatments for carpal tunnel syndrome.

The CTD-Mark I is a device some chiropractors and physiotherapists are offering as a treatment option, and unlike other devices it uses neither electricity nor surgery to treat the problem.

Carpal tunnel syndrome, also known as RSI (repetitive strain injury), is a potentially crippling problem encountered by some people as a result of years of intense, unvarying keyboard use and poor ergonomics. It can also occur in pregnant women and obese people as a result of nerve compression caused by swelling.

The crux of the problem lies in a nerve in the wrist that becomes compressed by surrounding anatomical structures, says Dr. Brian Kleinberg, a chiropractor at the Dufferin Steeles Chiropractic Health Centre.

People with carpal tunnel syndrome experience tingling and numbness in their wrist and arm (usually at night), lose grip strength, and become increasingly clumsy. Picking up objects becomes more difficult. There can also be pain in the forearm, shoulder, elbow, neck, and upper back, Dr. Kleinberg says.

Several approaches for treating the problem

are available and include massage, acupuncture, drug therapy with cortisone (to reduce inflammation), splinting, heat treatments, ultrasound, electrical stimulation, and surgery.

## Gimme an L?

When using the CTD Mark-I device, people with carpal tunnel put their affected arm in an L-shaped bracket, which has two straps to hold the arm and hand in place.

Pressure is then exerted on the forearm and wrist for about 5 seconds, then released. During a single treatment session, pressure is put on the patient's arm and released about 30 times.

The whole process helps make the carpal tunnel, as well as other structures such as ligaments creating pressure on the median nerve, relax or move away. "Patients should see results after 6 to 12 visits," Dr. Kleinberg says.

The treatment isn't complete. People still need to do exercises to help recover mobility and strength in their affected hand. Treatment with the device may not work for everyone, and it may be more effective on some people than on others.

"It's not a cure all, be all, or end all," Dr. Kleinberg says. It does, however, offer sufferers another option.

The CTD Mark-I was approved for use in Canada by Health Canada in the fall of 1996. ♦

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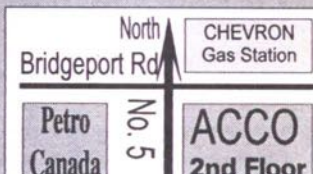


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# Beat the video-picking blues

• • By MYLES WHITE • •

If you've ever stood in a busy video store, thumbing through a dog-eared, out-of-date catalogue or trying to get some advice from staff, you already know how useless these tactics are—particularly if you can only remember a part of the title, want to see a list of films by a particular director or starring a specific actor, or if all you want is a particular genre of film ("I feel like a Western tonight"), or perhaps just a mood ("It's been a rough week and I could use a good laugh"). Three CD-ROM titles available this year can come to your rescue.

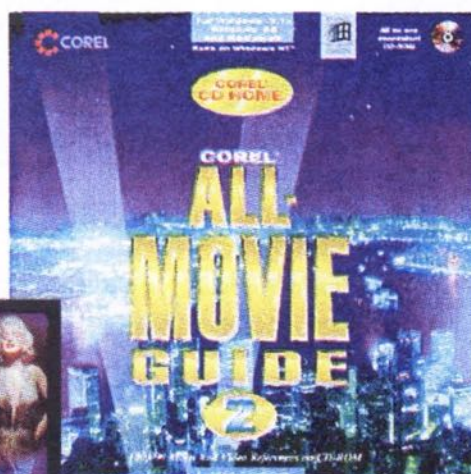
tions, reviews, still photos, and, in some instances, video clips.

Each of the titles has associated World Wide Web sites that allow, at least in the case of the *All Movie Guide* and *Cinemania*, periodic updates of their databases. Both products also offer links to other Web sites for studios, directors, actors and film cults.

## Which is which?

If the number of film titles on the CD-ROM is your paramount concern, the *Corel All Movie Guide* is a winner with over 100,000 titles (100,472 says the company). *The Blockbuster Guide* is next with just under 23,000, while *Cinemania 97* trails the pack with just under 21,000 titles in its database.

For all three products, once you enter a request, search time is virtually nil. In *Cinemania 97*, the list of possible titles is filtered as you type each character into its "Find" dialogue and a film title will be on the list long before you stop.



modified by selecting one year or a range of years and/or through the program's own five-star rating system.

*The Blockbuster Guide* offers free monthly updates via Internet (although we were unable to find exactly how you add the updates to the database when we visited the site), a listing of

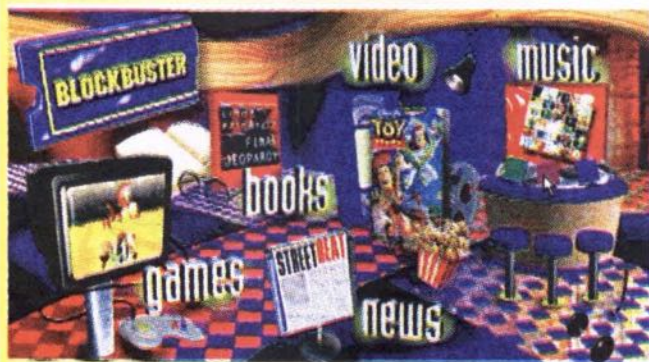
start the program, as well as random startup pointers to movie titles, biographies, and celebrity tours. All titles have a review or notes from Leonard Maltin, Roger Ebert, Pauline Kael, CineBooks's *The Motion Picture Guide*, or Baseline's *The Encyclopedia of Film*. Often, there is more than one choice of review.

*Cinemania* owners can get free online database updates from Microsoft via the Internet (you'll also be invited to subscribe, for a fee, to MS Online, but it's not required). Many of the film references and articles include hot links to other movie Web sites.

*Cinemania 97* is available for Windows 95 or NT and Mac.

## Criteria of choice

*The All Movie Guide's* main screen is a "video store" with each visible item leading somewhere else. There are 16 broad film categories on a video display rack



## "I feel like a Western tonight"

the "50 Greatest Movies of All Time" selected by a panel of critics, over 11,000 reviews from London's *Time Out* for

leading to the main title browser (including "Feature"—all titles—and "Recent"—titles released in the 1990s).

Behind the rack are other objects: video monitors, posters, and a checkout desk with store clerk and computer. Some of the objects start the browser restricted to titles with stills (the *All Movie Guide* contains no video clips), people with pictures, or famous people. The "clerk" (a different picture each time you start the program) calls a search wizard for searching movies by category, by up to two words in titles, or by name of actor or director.

Along the bottom of the screen are more search agents. You can sort by Criteria—long lists on several tabbed pages, including genre, category, MPAA rating (includes NC-17), *All Movie's* own five-star rating, years, and styles.

By itself, the "styles" filter has ten artistic styles (avant-garde to "psychotronic") and six production styles (silent, for TV, animation, live action, closed captioned, subtitles). You can choose one or several criteria on this page alone.

And that's just the "Criteria" search engine. Other search engines sort by keyword, plot synopsis, country, mood, award, and year. Additional features along this bottom strip: Birthdays (a database

## "It's been a rough week and I could use a good laugh"

The *All Movie Guide 2* (Corel), *Blockbuster Entertainment Guide to Movies and Videos*, 2nd edition (Creative Multimedia/Viacom), and

*The All Movie Guide* filters its list each time you pause in your typing—whether that's in the middle of a word or the end of a phrase. Only the *Blockbuster Guide* requires you to hit the "enter" key before it will start a search, but once that's done there isn't enough time to start a stop-watch before the results are on screen.

Instead of how quickly you can find a movie title you know, the number of ways to find one you *don't* know is more important.

## Keep it simple?

*The Blockbuster Guide* has the simplest searcher. Keywords, titles, and phrases are integrated into one database, but you can modify your search by setting other criteria—by limiting the search to Academy Award nominees or winners for various Award categories, specifying film genres (action, comedy, science-fiction, horror), selecting only titles with additional media on the disk (still photos or video clips), by MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) rating (G, PG, PG-13, or R—no X or NC-17), or by country. Each selection can be

*Film Guide*, recommended movie lists, biographies, cast and crew listings, and a movie trivia game, *StarLinks*.

*The Blockbuster Guide* is bundled with the *Billboard Music Guide*, and is available for Windows (3.1x or 95) and Mac.

## Searching by mood

*Cinemania 97's* opening screen provides a list of film genres, but other search options on the browsing screen are extensive. A search could include movie titles, people, articles, and/or "Cinemania Suggests," a list you can further modify with choices such as "a good laugh," "adrenaline rush," or "family fare."

Each category can have other filters: starring, also starring, directed by, awards, critics/ratings, MPAA rating (including unrated, X, and NC-17), country, tape or video disc, titles with still photos or videos on the CD, year, and whether to include TV movies. You can also search each broad category by word or phrase.

Other features include a trivia quiz with a different question each time you



*Cinemania 97* (Microsoft) offer the ability to search for titles, partial titles, keywords, and phrases. They have descrip-

*continued on page 20*



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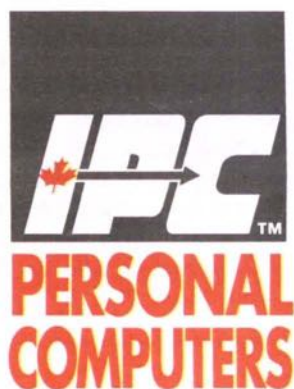
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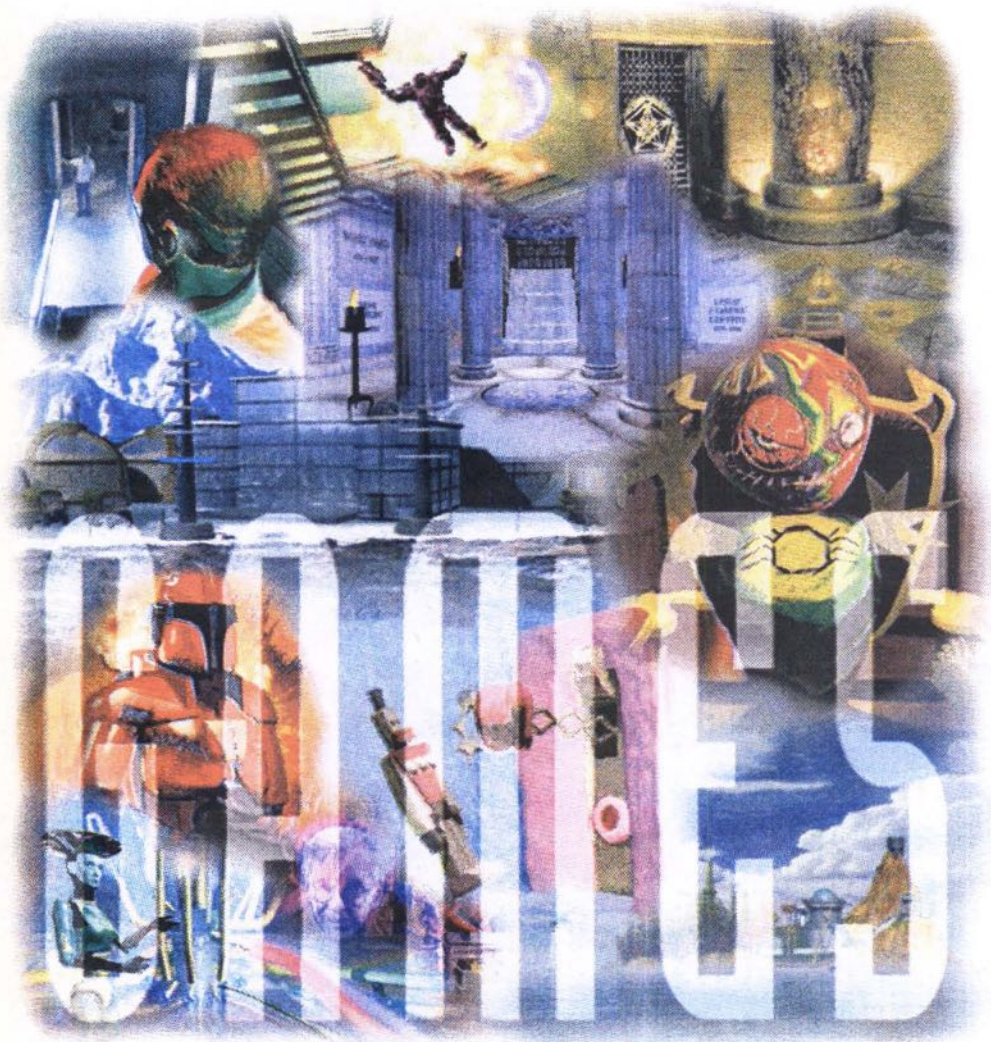
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# The games we play

Are  
computer  
games  
replacing  
board games?  
Do we really  
have to choose  
between them?

• • By WILLIAM A. WOOD • •

Well, there is a finite amount of leisure time, which we could spend playing one or the other. Board games and computer games are different, though. The latter are a generally solitary pursuit, and the former are meant to be enjoyed with one or more companions. As such, they don't really tread on each other's toes. If there is a contest, perhaps it's for our hearts and minds. It seems clear that computer games have captured the modern imagination. Maybe the real question is, when we have some free time, what do we want to play?

## Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Computer games have certainly taken hold of many people. Many a gamer has experienced the "I'll just play ten more minutes/one more turn/until the next major development...hey, the sun's coming up!" scenario. Like a book you can't put down (remember

those?), a computer game can dig its claws into you and cling like a bad habit.

Is computer gaming a bad habit? I remember bringing a copy of *Civilization* (addiction-wise, this game is pure evil) with me when visiting a friend for the weekend. And because he had two computers, we spent the weekend apart—we didn't even play together!

Today's games incorporate more possibilities for human/human interaction. You can log onto multiplayer Internet sites and strive against people all over the world. Closer to home, you can play many games against a friend via modem (*Command & Conquer* is awesome this way). In general, though, computer gaming is still something people do on their own. They may talk strategy with friends, but, ultimately, they play alone.

Board games are social situations, which can add levels of complexity to the play. Board games

continued on page 17

## WHAT'S NEW ON THE

# G A M I N G

## S C E N E

There are loads of exciting things happening in the computer-game industry. Here are a few of the latest.

• • By MARC SALTZMAN • •

### Did you hear the news?

If you want to keep abreast of the ever-changing interactive-entertainment industry, but don't have time to read a pile of magazines or visit your local retailer several times a week, you now have another option—if you're online, that is.

Via Real Audio, you can hear up-to-the-minute gaming news while you surf the Web. Simply visit the world's only radio centre dedicated to PC, Mac, and TV-console gaming, the All Games Network, and choose from up to eight different shows to hear through your computer's speakers.

Some shows are regular segments, updated daily, such as *Game Time!* and *Video Game Time!* Most impressive, however, are those covering individual game-genres: Mondays are Sports days; Tuesdays highlight Simulations; Wednesdays transmit the Action/Adventure bulletin; Thursdays are Strategy and Role-Playing Games; and on Fridays, you can hear the Internet and Multiplayer show. There are also hardware specials scattered throughout each month.

Each show is roughly 30 to 45 minutes long and the broadcast quality is quite good (I've been listening to them on a 28.8/33.6 Kbps modem during regular business hours, with little or no "buffering" snags).

Other notables at this site include a demo-download page of all the hot PC titles, a reviewer's corner, and a *Game Time!* chat area. The All Games Network is worthy of a bookmark for any computer- or TV-gaming enthusiast.

### The next best thing to being there

One of the most exciting turns in recent PC gaming is the technology to support multiplayer competitions over the Internet. This has revolutionized the computer-game industry, since you can now replace predictable AI (artificial intelligence) with human responses, against anyone in the world.

Major online networks have sprung up over

the past year, such as *Mplayer*, *TEN*, and *DWAN-GO*, which allow for real-time, head-to-head battles using your favourite CD-ROMs. For roughly \$10 to \$20 a month, you can engage in multiplayer *Duke Nukem 3D*, *Warcraft II*, or *Command & Conquer: Red Alert* action.

Many of us feel, however, that we spend enough per month for our Internet connection as it is. Thankfully, a few game manufacturers have quickly responded with various free online networks to support their own CD-ROM titles, or have spawned new sites whereby you don't even need a CD to play.

Blizzard's *Battle.net* provides an arena for their customers to chat, challenge opponents, and initiate multiplayer games, at no cost whatsoever—no hourly or monthly fee, no setup or initiation charge. To play a supported game over the Internet with other players worldwide, select the Internet option from within the game and away you go.

Two games were supported on *Battle.net* at presstime: the popular CRPG *Diablo*, and highly anticipated *Starcraft* (*Warcraft* in space!).

The next free place to visit, and bookmark, is *The BeZerk Network*. The folks at Berkeley Systems have opened their doors to PC and Mac players who get a kick out of their popular *You Don't Know Jack* CD-ROM series. Download a small file that resides on your hard drive (approximately 8 MB) and you can play either *You Don't Know Jack: The Net Show* or *You Don't Know Jack: Sports Edition*—online, in real time.

Pop Culture trivia questions change twice a week to keep things fresh, and top scorers compete for \$5,000 in cash and prizes per month. You'll be happy to know all the hilarity and witty humour from obnoxious host Nate Shapiro is intact.

Software gaming giant Sierra has also built a free network on which to play its games, aptly called *The Sierra Internet Gaming System* (SIGS). All you need to pay for are the CD-ROM games and, of course, your basic Internet time. Play *Blackjack*, *Trophy Bass 2*, *Poker*, *Power Chess*, and *Dr. Brain 4*, against many other Sierra fans. Future games to be supported by SIGS include *Football '97*, *Earth Siege 2*, *Birtbright*, *Mission Force: Cyberstorm*, and *Shivers 2*.

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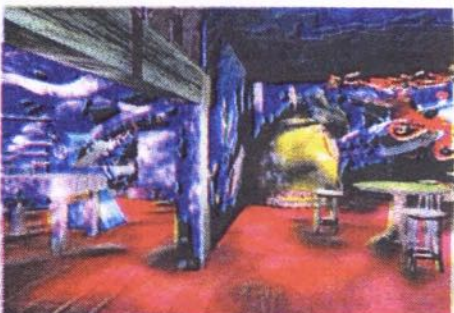
## What's new on the gaming scene...

continued from page 14

Lastly, I wanted to highlight the Internet Gaming Zone. Maintained by Microsoft, the Zone offers visitors classic games such as Chess, Checkers, Hearts, Bridge, Spades, Go, and Reversi. By the time you read this, you should be able to locate opponents to play more complex Microsoft retail games: *Close Combat*, *Monster Truck Madness*, *Hellbender*, and *Golf 3.0*. This is a sleek site with much to see and do.

Thanks and appreciation go out to the

game manufacturers who have acknowledged the rising costs of PC entertain-



The bakery scene from *Sierra Shivers II*.

ment, and have taken steps to make it easier for those of us who enjoy playing against *real* people!

## Hooray for Hollywood?

Ah, the evolution of PC gaming graphics: text adventures grew into blocky EGA and CGA graphics, then more colourful but still pixel-ish VGA developed into smoother SVGA graphics, which in turn have matured into live-motion video. Six months ago, I might have argued that hand-drawn or com-

puter-generated animation was much better than seeing real people in PC games, due to the generally poor acting and lack of true interactivity. With the introduction of Hollywood actors—and budgets—however, these problems seem to be annoyances of the past.

Some of the more popular games of late not only feature real actors and actresses, but fairly big names as well. The list includes Christopher Lloyd (*Toonstruck*), Tim Curry (*Frankenstein: Through the Eyes of a*

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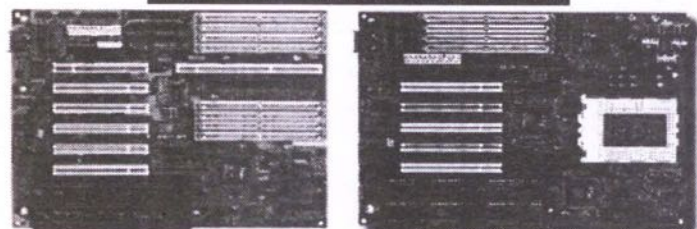
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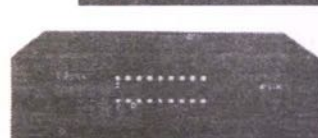
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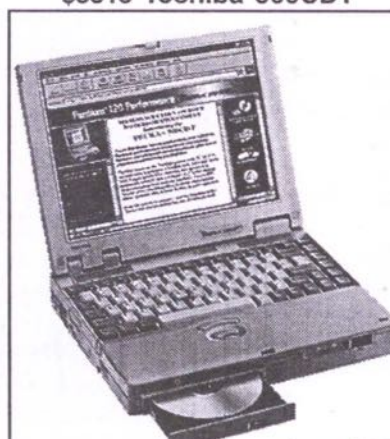
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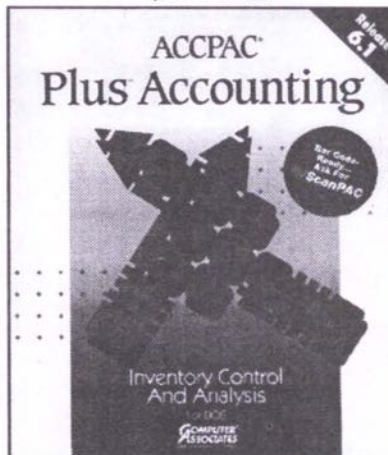
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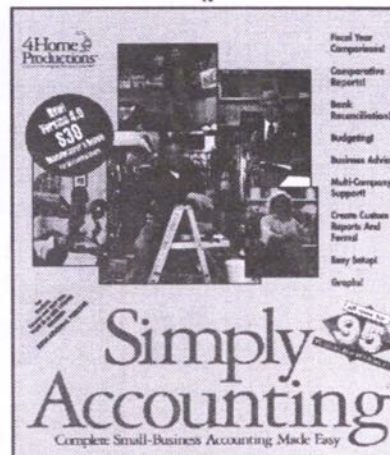


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### What's new on the gaming scene...

continued from page 15  
*Monster*, Christopher Walken and Anthony Burgess (*Ripper*), Dennis Hopper (*Hell: A CyberPunk Thriller*), Mark Hamill (*Wing Commander IV: The Price of Freedom*), Tia Carrere (*The Daedalus Encounter*), Margot Kidder (*Under A Killing Moon*), and Barry Corbin (*The Pandora Directive*).

Obviously, game manufacturers are hoping for increased sales by slapping a famous name on the box cover, but does it make for a better game? We all know a familiar face, or voice, will not salvage a game with a weak plot, lousy controls, or monotonous gameplay. After completing well put-together products such as *The Pandora Directive*, *Spycraft*, *The Great Game*, and *Gabriel Knight 2: The Beast Within*, however, it seems it certainly can be done with the some finesse.

It is fascinating to see this recent amalgamation and I'm curious to see who may star in upcoming products. Personally, I'm waiting for a comedy CD-ROM game with Adam Sandler or Jim Carrey, or an interactive adventure/action game with good 'ol Arnold. C'mon, Activision, are you listening? Sierra? Virgin? Anyone?

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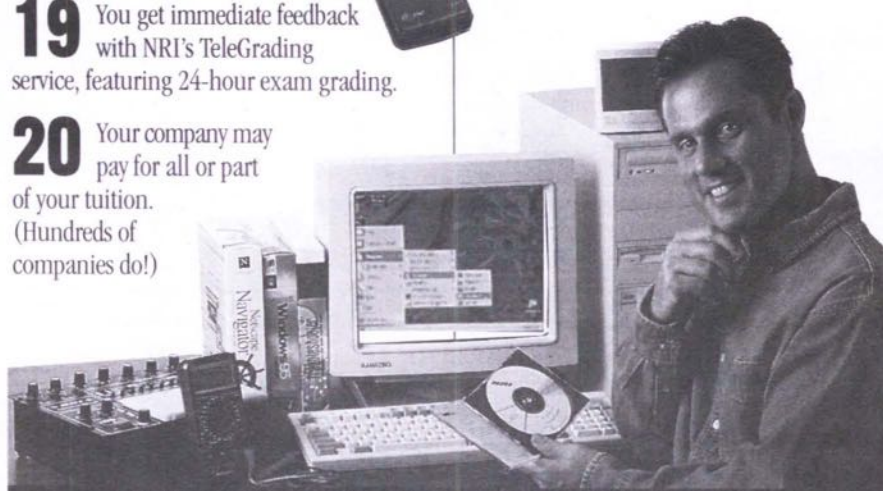
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### A novice's guide to computer and multiplayer gaming slang

Often in a casual conversation about PC games, I'll spew out some words that will cause my friends to interrupt "Wait a minute...what the hell is a frag?"

I know I'm guilty of assuming everybody plays computer games as much as I do (or at least I'd like to believe that!), but I guess a short list of definitions is in order for some of the more common, or not-so-common, terms heard amongst us die-hard PC or Mac gaming enthusiasts:

AI (Artificial Intelligence): an attempt to model aspects of human thought on computers.

CRPG (Computer Role-Playing Game): a game that relies more on character development (usually involving statistics), conversation, interaction with NPCs (non-playing characters), and strategic combat rather than puzzle-solving skills. Huge epic quests and fantasy worlds are common, and storylines are not always as linear as in traditional computer adventure games.



Anthony Burgess stars in *Ripper*.

Easter Eggs: a hidden feature or novelty that the programmers have put in their software. This can be anything: hidden jokes, pictures, movies, animations, a list of the developers, hidden commands, and more. Many games contain these bonus treats and they're often tough (but rewarding) to find. If you want to know if there are any in your games, or know of one to contribute, take a peek at The Easter Egg Archive on the Web.

Frag: a point system for online multiplayer "Deathmatch" games, such as *Doom*, *Duke Nukem 3D*, and *Quake*. You get a frag when

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## What's new on the gaming scene ...

continued from page 16

you take a life, and lose one if you die. The person at the end of a level/map with the most frags wins. These multiple-player combat rounds are also suitably called "FragFests."

Hybrid: a CD-ROM that works on both a Mac and a PC.

Latency: the time it takes for a packet (any unit of data) to cross a network connection, from sender to receiver. Relevant in online multiplayer games. See Ping.

Ping: a term for a small network message sent by a computer to check for the presence and alertness of another. In other words, prior to playing a head-to-head game over the Net, you are urged to measure the "ping time" of a server to make sure it isn't too large (therefore slowing responses, which will result in increased lags and slow-downs). You can "ping" others with various utilities available at most major software sites on the Web. So, the smaller the ping time between computer, the better/faster for online gaming!

Pixel Hunt: a slang, often derogatory term for those adventure games that require you to slowly move your mouse around a screen until it hits a "hot spot," which you have to click to complete an action. Games like this are often frustrating, since they rely on your spending time caressing the screen with your pointer looking for small or hidden objects rather than on more cognitive puzzle solving.

Shareware/Freeware/Demos: different types of games available online. Shareware games are free to play and distribute, but if you choose to continue using the product, a small donation to the game's author is expected. Shareware is based on the honour system, which provides the gamer with an opportunity to "try before you buy." Freeware differs in that it is completely free to play, and a fee is not expected. These games are usually made by independent programmers looking to gain experience or recognition. Demos are similar to shareware games, but they aren't usually the complete game (a few levels, for example). There is also no cost to the user. Commercial game companies are banking on you getting hooked on the playable demo so you'll purchase the full version in retail stores. In some cases, you can download the full version online if you pay by credit card over the phone. ♦

## Are computer games replacing ...

continued from page 14

can teach you about human nature: how people behave when they win or lose, and how they deal with conflict. They can bring people together in the spirit of good-natured competition, or bruise friendships through bitter competitiveness.

I, like many people, have progressed from board games to computer games. What concerns me is

that kids, now growing up in a world where computers are far more common, will skip board games and go straight to *Duke Nukem*. I lived through the Atari. I know it can happen.

### It's good to be board

I think it's important that we preserve places in our lives for board games. They may not be as visceral an experience, but they are still tremendously appealing, if given half a chance.

I've played board games my entire life, from the classics (*Monopoly*, *Careers*, *Battleship*, *Risk*, *Life*, *Clue*, *PayDay*—the list really does go on and on) to the more obscure (*King Oil*, *Bermuda Triangle*, *Ker-Plunk*, *Scotland Yard*). I've played role-playing games (kind of like board games without the board) such as *Dungeons and Dragons* and *Traveller*, and "simulations" like *Squad Leader*, *War*

continued on page 20



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# Syndicate Wars: DYSTOPIAN DELIGHT

• • By WILLIAM A. WOOD • •

A

ll games want atmosphere, and most claim it. *Syndicate Wars* is crammed so full of it, it practically leaks out of the box.

The concept of the original *Syndicate* was deceptively simple—and delightfully dystopian. As a junior executive in the EuroCorp syndicate (a multinational quasi-company intent on nothing short of world domination), you were placed in charge of guiding a small force of brainwashed automatons, or, volunteers through various real-time missions in urban settings. Most stories involved eliminating agents of enemy syndicates, brainwashing useful civilians, or protecting your syndicate's property (human or otherwise).



A limited amount of resource management was required: researching weapons and cybernetic modifications in order to create more awesome agents, mostly. The bulk of the game took place in the field, and the action could get fast and furious.

Well, guess what? Your syndicate took over the world. Too bad your control is starting to slip, though. Zealots from the Church of the New Epoch are challenging your domination. The "unchipped" (citizens who have been released from your electronic mind control) are starting to revolt. Time to go back into the fray.

*Syndicate Wars* wisely keeps the basic structure from *Syndicate* intact (top-down view, decent-sized sprites), but a real difference can be seen and heard in the vastly improved SVGA graphics and the incredible CD sound.

Other improvements include: a mission screen that is now fully rotational (so your agents won't disappear behind buildings anymore!); fun new weapons (Nuclear grenades! Razor wire!); more latitude in choosing missions (should I go "persuade" a couple scien-

tists to join my research team, or knock over a bank for some much-needed capital first?); flying vehicles; complex and dynamic mission maps (*everything* can be destroyed,

with enough firepower); and a really nasty, unforgiving AI.

And once you reconquer the world, you can play the game all over again—as a Zealot

(death to the Syndicate!). With the addition of multiplayer mayhem, what more could you want? Get this game—or do you need a little more "persuasion?" ♦

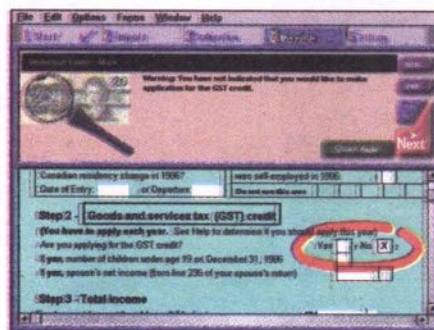
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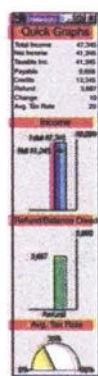
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*Syndicate Wars*, from Bullfrog Productions Ltd.  
DOS/Win95 CD-ROM. \$60-\$65 (street). For ages 13 and up.

System requirements: 486 DX4/100 system (Pentium recommended), SVGA video card, double-speed CD-ROM, 70 MB hard-drive space, 8 MB RAM (16 MB recommended).



## Beat the video-picking blues ... continued from page 12

of various entertainment figures sorted by day and month) and a glossary of film and related terms (what's a "B" movie?).

Once you've made it to a browser screen, you get more choices. You can have the title list stay on screen or disappear when a selection is made, filter the list by famous people,

directors, or only those with still photos of people or films on the CD. You can add a movie title to your own personal database under the headings of "very good, average, poor" or "rent, purchase, own." You can also add annotations to a title.

You can look up movies via timeline, access the Criteria filter for more refinement, ask the program to provide a list of films based on matching content to the movie title currently

on screen (this can be a long process), or you can ask it to suggest films that match your personal categories.

Last, but by no means least, the *All Movie Guide* includes hotlinks to movie Web sites and free, quarterly updates of its database from Corel's Web site, as well as a movie trivia game and a movie crossword puzzle—each of which can be further filtered by category, genre, and a host of other criteria. A single

word description of the *Corel All Movie Guide* may as well be "exhaustive."

The same *All Movie Guide 2* CD works under Windows (3.1, 95 or NT) and Mac operating systems.

### Recommended selection

For a couple of years now, Microsoft's *Cinemania 97* has been the leader of the pack when it came to CD-based movie databases, and it feels faster. Creative Multimedia's *Blockbuster Guide's* interface is still rough in spots, but we'll still give it marks for effort—although it appears overpriced. *The Corel All Movie Guide 2*, despite its lack of video clips, is our choice of the best of breed for this season—not only because of its overwhelming list of titles and lowest price, but also because of the number of ways you search for tonight's entertainment. ♦

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## Are computer games replacing ... continued from page 17

in Europe, and *War of the Ring*. I've played board games that were good, cheesy fun (*Awful Green Things From Outer Space*, *Snit's Revenge*) and ones that were deadly serious (*Diplomacy*).

I have no desire to stop playing board games. I really enjoyed playing *Scrabble* with my dad over Christmas. And have you ever tried playing *Scruples* with a computer? You won't learn much. I sometimes wonder if computer games aren't simply a crutch, disguising the fact that we often lack humans to play against.

Then again, computer games have an unmatched power to fascinate people for long periods of time. I played *Wizardry* and *Bard's Tale* (in cooperation with a friend, come to think of it!), several days a week, for months and months. *SimCity*, *Civilization*, and *F-19 Stealth Fighter* were constant companions for years.

In fact, I can still remember my first computer game, a little boxing text game from 1975 or so ("pick 1 to throw a jab, pick 2 to throw an uppercut, pick 3 to block"). I was amazed, and hooked. So, if you look up at my window at 3:00 AM, and the light's still on, I'm either a) up finishing this article (oops), or b) still trying to conquer the galaxy in *Master of Orion II*. I'm just playing until I get my next scientific advance, though. Honest. ♦



# Hidden game gems in bargain bins

•• By MARC SALTZMAN ••

With the price of a new CD-ROM roughly four or five times the cost of a regular music CD, game shopping can really wallop your wallet. So soon after the holiday season, who has that kind of money to blow?

Of course, most computer retail stores have their so-called "bargain bins," overflowing with overstock, unwanted, and older titles, but are there enough worthwhile games in there to bother looking for the needle in the haystack? The answer is, most definitely yes.

Although you will find deals in all genres of computer games, I found the best titles were in the action, RPG, and adventure categories.

Remember, prices may vary slightly, but all of my research was confined to Electronic Boutique, Compucentre, Radio Shack, and The Office Place locations.

## Get in on the action

Since GTE has recently released their *FX Fighter Turbo edition*, you'll be able to scoop up the original *FX Fighter* CD-ROM for as low as \$12. One of the better fighting games for the PC, you'll be amazed at the beautiful graphics, fluidity of animation, and heart-pounding techno soundtrack.

*Magic Carpet* and *Magic Carpet II: The Neverworlds* are both outstanding first-person perspective fantasy games whereby you fly through many 3-D-rendered worlds on—you guessed it, a magic carpet. EA/Bullfrog's moody

games place you, the protagonist, through a dimensional portal in order to fight the evil Demon Lord and its gothic henchmen. Bonus: both games are also supported

by the Virtual I/O VR headset for the ultimate experience.

Pick up these games individually for \$20 each, or packaged together for \$35.

## What's my role?

After a two-year draught, we are finally seeing a light at the end of the tunnel for the RPG (role-playing game) genre for the PC. While I waited, I blew the dust off of older boxes and have since seen these same hidden gems in bargain bins city-wide.

Most computer game fans are familiar with Origin's best-selling *Ultima* series. Since the original game in 1979, created from the mind of Richard "Lord British" Garriott, many chapters have resided on plenty a hard drive. These three latter titles, *The Black Gate*, *The Serpent Isle*, and *Pagan*, are all deserving RPGs—especially for under \$20 each. Don't expect dazzling graphics or superior sound, but you will find yourself absorbed by their intriguing story-

lines, characters, and overall gameplay.

Sierra/Dynamix's *Betrayal at Krondor* is another worthy catch. Based on Raymond E.

Feist's *Riftwar* series, this addictive game casts you as a traveller exploring the large world of Midkemia, and takes you on a number of epic quests. The floppy disk version (\$15) is still floating around and doesn't differ too much from the \$20 CD-ROM version (only enhanced music has been added). The game features many characters and towns, and uses turn-based combat scenes for you and your party.

PS: This awesome, unofficial *Betrayal at Krondor* Web page will help you along on your journey: <http://www.rhi.hi.is/~eybjorn/krondor/krondor.html>

## Live the adventure!

The popular adventure genre of computer games dominates the retail "sale" bins, and there are many commendable CD-ROMs from which to choose. *Day of the Tentacle* and *Sam 'N Max Hit The*

*Road* are both hilarious and challenging titles from the folks at LucasArts. Both cartoon games are well written, with good plots, and hours and hours of puzzles. *Day of the Tentacle* is the sequel to *Maniac Mansion* and features the voice of WKRP In Cincinnati's Les Nesman (actor Richard Sanders), while *Sam 'N Max Hit the Road* is based upon Steve Purcell's wacky underground comic book series. You can find them packaged in the *LucasArts Archives Volume 1 Pack*, or individually for only \$20 each.

Adventure gaming and Sierra go hand-in-hand. For approximately \$25, you can own the *Sierra Game Pack* containing six classic games: the haunting *Gabriel Knight*; *Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards* (the one that started it all); Roberta Williams's popular *Kings Quest V*; *Quest for Glory*; the strategic *Caesar*; and the award-winning flight sim, *Red Baron*.

OK, I've been saving the best for last. Talk about a steal—look for the complete CD-ROM version of *Return to Zork* bundled with the *Zork Anthology* (text adventures *Zork*, *Zork II*, *Zork III*, *Beyond Zork*, *Zork Zero*, and bonus: *Planetfall*)—all for \$18. Activision distributes these Infocom hits that will keep you warm until the snow melts.

Remember to keep your eyes open for "bar-goons," because you'll find a lot of manufacturers bundling and reducing prices of older titles. Good luck and happy gaming! ♦





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# Assassin CUTS OUT TOO QUICKLY

• • By MARK SALTZMAN • •

It's been a long time since I've enjoyed the pre-release demo of a game so much. Months before Inscape's *Assassin: 2015* hit the retail shelves, I had a copy of this *Doom*-style shoot-'em-up in my hands. It had the same first-person perspective view of most action games of recent memory, but this time, it had something that seemed to be lacking in most in this genre—a *real* story.

From its jaw-dropping intro, to the conclusion of a short but sweaty battle against a slew of trigger-happy robots, I was glued to my monitor and simply could not wait until the full version came out.

Well, that day came, and boy, was I disappointed. Why, you ask? Well, let's start with the game's admirable qualities first—because oddly enough, there are many of them.

The premise of *Assassin: 2015* is quite interesting. You are Jack Butcher, a hired assassin in the post-apocalyptic year of 2015, assigned to take out the maniacal CEO of a robotic soldier manufacturer. The fun begins after you think your work is complete and you find yourself cornered in the building by the corrupt leader's motley crew. You discover later on why there was so much building security for an ordinary press conference—you were set up.

Fighting occurs in the rooms and hallways of this building, with enjoyable cut-scenes replicating a cool move on your part, or the aftermath of succeeding a tense moment.

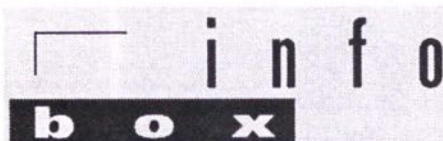
The graphics are impressive, as are the sound effects, voice-overs, and music. The controls were easy to use, or if you prefer something more familiar, you may easily tweak the keyboard to your individual preferences.

## Time ain't on my side

So, if the storyline, graphics, cut-scenes, music, and sound effects were good, why was I so disappointed with the full game? The answer: the complete version of *Assassin: 2015*

took me only 35 minutes to finish. 35 minutes. For a \$70 game. That's two dollars a minute! Why would Inscape release a game that could be completed so fast?

My suggestion to all action fans who have



*Assassin: 2015*, from Inscape. Win95 CD-ROM. \$59.99 (street).  
System Requirements: Windows 95, 486 DX/66 Mhz, 16 MB RAM, quad-speed CD-ROM, 8-bit sound card, 256 colours in 640 x 480 mode, 50 MB hard-drive space

been curious about the game—don't buy it. Play the demo (complete with the great intro movie), which is available on many computer-game magazine CD-ROMs, such as *Computer Gaming World*, *PC Games*, or *PC*

*Gamer*. Believe you me, the full version is not much longer than this free demo.

*Assassin: 2015* is the sad result of what could have been one of the top action titles in a long time. ♦

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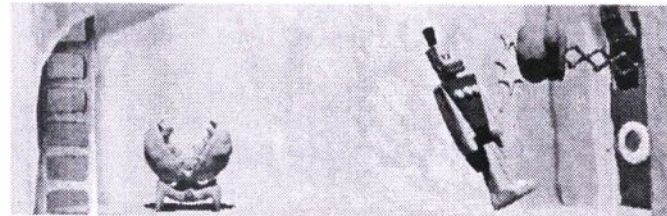
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## Games

# These are the people in your NEVERHOOD

• • By MARC SALTZMAN • •

In struggling to find the right words to describe *The Neverhood* to people, I often refer back to what Mark Forrester, from Global TV's *First Byte*, said about the game: "It's like *Myst* meets *Gumby*."



### Bop goes The Klaymen

I think that's dead on. In case you've been living under a rock for the past few years, *Myst* was an instant-classic adventure game that is still selling remarkably well considering it debuted over three years ago. In the beautifully detailed universe of *Myst*, you had

one main quest (that wasn't apparent at the beginning of the game), but had to solve smaller, and quite tough, puzzles in order to complete your primary goal.

Gumby, on the other hand, was a lovable clay character that appeared on television in the 1950s and 1960s, and eventually

attracted quite a cult following. Gumby, for his cute flexible appearance and naive curiosity, has etched its way into the annals of recent pop culture.

*The Neverhood* is truly a wonderful combination of these two phenomena: a claymation adventure

game whereby you must unravel the evil source behind the city of the Neverhood, and restore peace and happiness to all its wacky inhabitants.

continued on page 25

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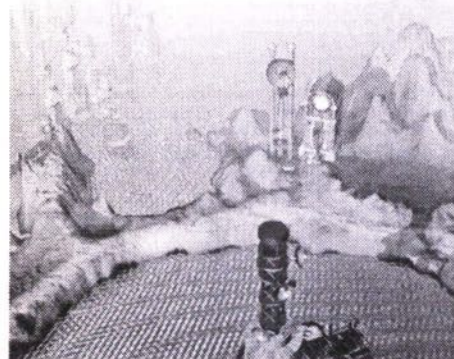
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These are the people in your ...  
continued from page 24



Cyan's Myst

### Eat your heart out, Ghost

You control The Klaymen as he sets out to tackle over 60 puzzles in crisp SVGA graphics and, if your system is powerful enough, very smooth animation and fluid character movement. There are over 50,000 frames of animation and three tons of clay used here, and the game took over one year to complete. The scenery is gorgeous and the voices and jazzy/folky music is professionally executed.

Setup is a snap, utilizing Windows 95's auto-play feature and automatic sound and video detection, and the rest of the game is controlled effortlessly via the mouse.

*The Neverhood* is downright hilarious—I don't think a computer game has made me

laugh out loud so much since Lucas Art's *Day of The Tentacle*. Don't be fooled by the character's lovable clay appearance (hand-crafted by *Earthworm Jim*'s creator Doug TenNapel) and light-hearted storyline, though—*The Neverhood* is a tough game to finish.

This leads me to the only problem I have with this game: some of the latter obstacles in the game are quite far-fetched. Don't get me wrong I don't have any beefs about a hard or challenging game, but I found some of the puzzles ambiguous and obscure.

Despite this one shortcoming, *The Neverhood* is a must-have CD-ROM for any adventure gamer's collection. It has all the elements of a worthwhile product: appeal-

ing characters, simple controls, a juicy plot, a unique visual experience (like *Myst*), memorable music, high replayability, and a gratifying conclusion.

This product marks the first release from DreamWorks Interactive—a collaborative effort from the talents of Stephen Spielberg, David Geffen, and Jerry Katzenberg. ♦

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The *Neverhood*, from DreamWorks Interactive. Win95 CD-ROM. \$59.99 to \$69.99 (street). System requirements: Pentium 75 MHz, 8 MB RAM (16 MB recommended), quad-speed CD-ROM, SVGA monitor, 8 bit Windows-compatible sound card and speakers (16 bit recommended), 10 MB hard-drive space

### The online 'hood

Try out *The Neverhood* for free by downloading one of two different playable demos at the GameSpot Web site. Point your browser to <http://www.gamespot.com/adventure/nhood/demos.html>. For those of you who are stuck—and I mean really stuck (I've been there, man), go to the *The Neverhood* Web site (<http://www.neverhood.com/>) for many helpful hints on various stages in the game.

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# Your cheatin' heart

• • By MARC SALZTMAN • •

I know, I know. You're not interested in mere strategy tips or techniques. You don't have time for any subtle hints, nor are you patient enough for any long techno-babble answers as to how to conquer your favourite CD-ROM games. You crave *answers*, and you want these short-cuts now. What you need are the programmer's cheat codes so you can crack into your game and change it to make it easier, more fun, and to dazzle your friends with some often hard-to-find keyboard tricks. Well, here you go.

## Mechwarrior 2: Mercenaries

Activision's hit game can get quite tough at times, so enter the following commands while holding the CTRL+ALT+SHIFT keys during the game (i.e., TYPE THIS: get this):  
 SUPERFUNKICALIFRAGISEXY: turn invulnerability on/off  
 ISEENFIREANDISEENRAIN: unlimited ammo on/off  
 OOOHHHLLAAALLAAA: heat tracking on/off  
 WEDIDITAGAIN: coming at cha again (Dorcs screen)  
 ITSDABOMBINMYBEAUTIFULBALLOON: sprout jump-jets  
 LIKETHECOMSTARBABY: end mission successfully  
 ONTIMEEVERYTIME: time compression key enabled/disabled

BUBBLEBOY: bounding spheres on/off  
 CRAZYSEXYCOOL: infinite jumpjets on/off  
 BEHOLDMYGLORY: free eye mode on/off  
 ANTIJOLT: time expansion enabled/disabled  
 FLASHYFLASHY: auto-grouping enabled/disabled  
 WALKTHISWAY: leading reticle enabled/disabled

## Quake

Hit the ~ key (called a tilde) to enter the Console mode. Type the desired code, press ENTER/RETURN to record it, and then press ESC to return to the game. Enjoy:  
 GOD: makes you invincible  
 FLY: enables you to fly—press D for up and C for down  
 IMPULSE 9: arms you with all weapons.  
 IMPULSE 255: turns on quad damage  
 MAP ExMy: jump to any level in Quake, where x is the desired episode and y is the desired level  
 GIVE "weapon": adds a particular weapon to your arsenal (#s 1-9)  
 GIVE "item" "amount": sets ammunition or health points (S=Shells, N=nails, R=rockets, C=energy cells, etc.)

## Duke Nukem 3D

You may have heard of a few of these, but I'm sure you don't know 'em all. At any point during the game, type

in the following words for the desired effect:  
 DNCORNHOLIO: God Mode (and unlimited Jetpack)  
 DNKROZ: same as above, just fewer words to type  
 DNVIEW: same as the F7 key in the game. (with the message "You're too good to be cheating!")  
 DNHYPER: puts you in Steroids Mode  
 DNITEMS: gives all inventory items and keys  
 DNWEAPONS: gives all weapons and ammo  
 DNKEYS: gives all the keys  
 DNSTUFF: gives all weapons, keys, inventory items  
 DNSCOTTYxyz: level warp where x is the episode number, and yz is the level number  
 DNSKILLx: changes the difficulty mode to x (can be 0 to 3)  
 DNUNLOCK: opens all doors and unlocks all locked doors  
 DNMONSTERS: turns on/off the monsters in the game  
 DNCUIP: walk through walls  
 DNSHOWMAP: shows the entire map  
 DNCASHMAN: spews money everywhere when you press spacebar  
 DNCOORDS: shows detailed map coordinate/ level information  
 DNDEBUG: shows some debug information  
 DNRATE: shows your frame rate onscreen  
 DNBETA: prints the message "Pirates Suck!"  
 DNALLEN: prints the message "Buy Major Stryker"  
 DNTODD: prints the message "Register Cosmo Today!"

## Warcraft II

Whether you play as the evil Orcs or noble Humans, try out these codes to add some spice to your game:  
 DAY: displays "fief" on the screen  
 DECK ME OUT: upgrades all technologies instantly

EVERY LITTLE THING SHE DOES: magic users given all the spells  
 FASTDEMO: demo scenes at main menu start faster  
 GLITTERING PRIZES: adds gold and lumber to your resources  
 HATCHET/AXE/SAW: increases harvesting of lumber  
 IT IS A GOOD DAY TO DIE: invulnerability with 255 damage bonus  
 MAKE IT SO: buildings, units, upgrades built quicker  
 NETPROF: watch a laser show  
 NEVER A WINNER: removes victory  
 NOGLUES: disables magical traps  
 ON SCREEN: uncovers map (also works with modern play)  
 TIGERLILY: skip levels in campaign play  
 ORCn / HUMANn: jumps to level n (type TIGERLILY first)  
 SHOWPATH: as with ON SCREEN, displays whole map  
 THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE: jump to final movie  
 TITLE: units travel faster  
 UCLA: displays "Go Bruins" on the screen  
 UNITE THE CLANS: instant victory  
 VALDEZ / SPYCOB: adds 5000 oil to your resources  
 YOU PITIFUL WORM: instant defeat

## Bonus Game: Command & Conquer

Well, there's bad news and good news for fans of Westwood's popular C & C series. The bad news is that there are no official cheat codes—they were taken out of the game by the programmers prior to beta testing. The good news is that some people don't take no for an answer. Point your browser to <http://www.gamesmania.com/cnc/command.html> to find out how it's done. ♦

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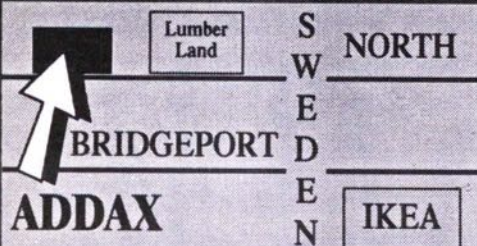


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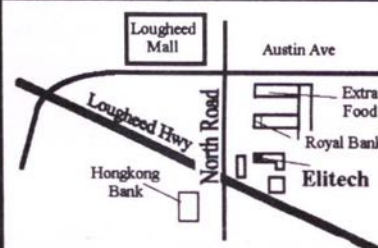
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## GAMING HARDWARE:

## Controlling the mayhem

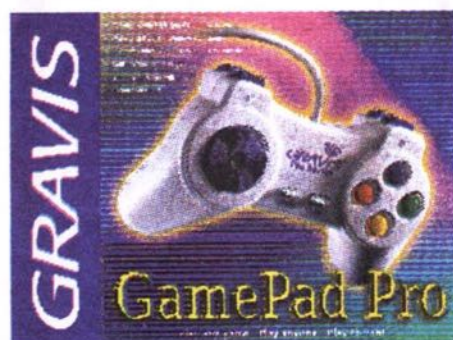
• • By MYLES WHITE • •

You're firmly strapped into your heavily armoured Mech. Bad guys with evil intent are everywhere, trying to turn you into digital roadkill. Your hands have to be in three places at once and the \$10 joystick you bought at a yard sale isn't up to the task. What're ya gonna do, Binky?



If you're becoming a serious gamer, you'll hike down to your local computer store for some serious shopping. The first thing you'll discover is that joysticks have changed—a lot—since the last time you paid attention. The simple two-button stick with flimsy moveable grip doesn't cut it any more, gaming controllers cost more than ten bucks, and to round out the surprise tour, you'll find that "joystick" has almost become a retired term.

Today's market is filled with flightsticks and gamepads, not to mention more esoteric specialty devices for flying simulations, driving simulations, and pinball simulations.

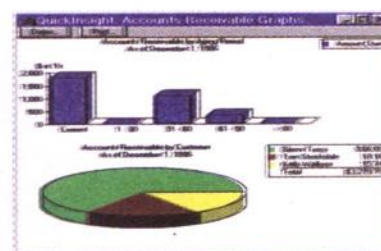


Models are distinctly military in flavour—named after combat jets and helicopters (F-16, Cobra), missiles and other weapons (SideWinder, Mortar), or just plain intent (Assassin). That should get you in the right mood to consider the prices for today's nationally advertised brand-name game hardware, from around Cdn\$50 for the Microsoft SideWinder Gamepad to around US\$179 for the ThrustMaster F-22 Pro or US\$500 for its F-16 FLCS Limited Edition.

continued on page 30

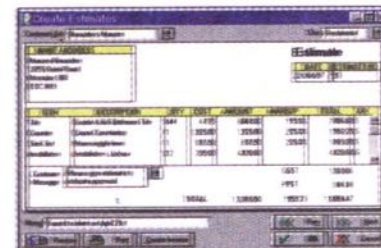
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## Games

### Gaming hardware: Controlling... continued from page 29

#### Making choices

If you're anything like some of the serious PC gamers I know, you don't stick to one game; you gobble 'em up like candy and switch among several—so one of your prime concerns will be compatibility. Although the PC's 15-pin game port hasn't undergone many changes since the first IBM PC, operating systems and game sophistication have.

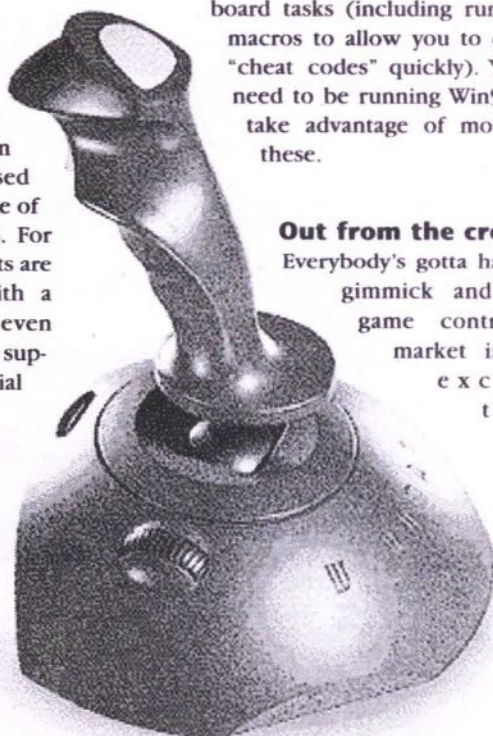
Off the top, you'll find products from ThrustMaster and Canadian-based Advanced Gravis have the widest range of support in both Windows and DOS. For example, only drivers for their products are included in Windows 95 along with a generic "joystick" driver (not even Microsoft's SideWinders are explicitly supported in the August 1995 commercial version).

If you're interested in digital joysticks (as opposed to analog types using potentiometers), then your choices are narrowed to two contenders for now: Microsoft's SideWinder 3D Pro and Logitech's Wingman Warrior.

Universal Serial Bus (USB) isn't in wide use yet, but it will begin to be part of new PCs shipping this

year. Look for compatible products from Advanced Gravis, Logitech, and Microsoft to hit shelves first.

Programmability is a hot issue with game controllers. It's offered by a variety of companies, particularly those with gamepads in their lineups. Software such as Microsoft's *Game Profiler* allow you to program various buttons to take on certain keyboard tasks (including running macros to allow you to enter "cheat codes" quickly). You'll need to be running Win95 to take advantage of most of these.



#### Out from the crowd

Everybody's gotta have a gimmick and the game controller market is no exception.

The Logitech Wingman

Some of the neat tricks that stood out in my survey included:

- The ability to gang pads together to allow multiple players at the same console (Microsoft SideWinder Gamepad, Gravis GRiP system, ThrustMaster Phaser).
- A knob that allows you to whirl in a 360 degree circle as fast as you can twirl it with your left hand while continuing to fire with your right—especially good if nasties with sharp pointy teeth or big guns are coming up on your right, left, and rear (Logitech Wingman Warrior).
- Eight-way "hat" switches (as opposed to the more limited 4-way switches that were popular last week) allowing you to look in many directions quickly—the alternative to the Warrior's SpinControl (Microsoft SideWinder 3D Pro, Gravis Firebird 2, Mouse Systems Cobra).
- A special button that allows you to instantly flip 180 degrees to save you if you hit the wrong switch (Wingman Warrior).
- Suction cups to hold the joystick down (Cobra)—most others merely weight the base.
- A detachable joystick handle to allow you to use a gamepad as a pad or stick (Gravis GamePad Pro). ♦

## i n f o b o x

**Advanced Gravis.** Wide range of gamepads and joysticks. Contact: 1-800-257-0061 or (604) 431-5020; <http://www.gravis.com/>

**CH Products.** Wide range of flight simulator products for PC and Mac. Contact: 1-800-624-5804 or (619) 598 2518; <http://www.chproducts.com/>

**First Person Gaming.** Assassin 3-D adds on to your joystick, controls turns and glances up and down, but leaves firing and forward and back movement to your joystick. Contact: 1-888-374-2646; <http://www.fpgaming.com/>

**Kye International (Genius).** Lower priced range of joysticks and gamepads with endearing names such as Beagle, Condor, and Mortar. Contact: 1-800-456-7593 or (909) 923-3510; <http://www.genius-kye.com/>

**Logitech.** Wingman, Wingman Extreme, and Wingman Warrior. Contact: 1-800-231-7717 or (510) 795-8500; <http://www.logitech.com/>

**Microsoft Canada.** SideWinder, SideWinder 3D Pro, SideWinder GamePad. Contact: 1-800-563-9048 (Info); 1-800-933-4750 (sales); (905) 568-0434; <http://www.microsoft.com/canada/>

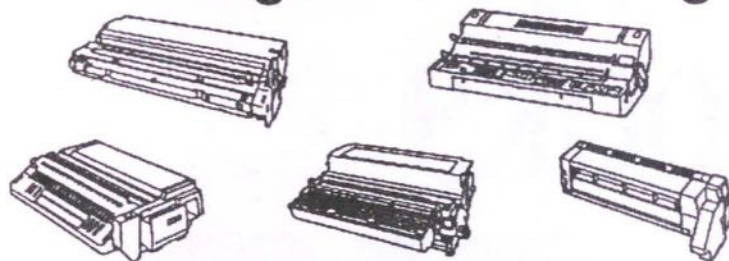
**Mouse Systems.** Cobra joystick. Contact: (510) 656-1117; <http://www.mousesystems.com/>

**ThrustMaster.** Extensive line of heavy-duty (and heavy-priced) game controllers including specialized units for flying, driving, pinball, and just generally shooting the hell out of everything. Contact: (503) 615-3200. <http://www.thrustmaster.com/>

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# HP: Great colour printing, perplexing marketing

The relentless pursuit of happiness (as in photo-realistic colour reproduction on inkjet printers) took yet another upturn when Hewlett-Packard introduced the newest family member in its "family" printers, the 690C, featuring HP's new proprietary "photo-resolution enhancement technology."

• • By PAUL ANGYAL • •

This is a new way of creating dots of colour for an image: instead of the industry standard three-colours-plus-black (CMYK) process, the technology works with six shades. HP achieves this by substituting the black ink cartridge (the 690C is a dual cartridge machine) with a special "photo-cartridge" that adds light blue, light magenta, and black to the palette.

The photo-kit is interchangeable with the black as the need arises. The company is betting on the anticipated rapid proliferation of digital cameras, scanners, and other means of acquiring and working with digitized images.

Bringing higher quality reproduction technology to the desktop will surely give you better-looking greeting cards, but it should also appeal to professionals and small-business operators, where quality-on-demand-and-in-small-quantities is an important cost factor (no set-up costs, no minimum quantities).

## Here come the eight-by-tens

HP recommends its new grade of special "photo" paper for this printer. You can use the glossy side for photos, but you can also print text on the matte back in the name of conservation.

Priced at around \$18 for 20 letter-sized sheets, it is quite competitive compared to regular photofinishing costs, where a 4 x 6-inch print comes in at around 66 cents and you have to shoot the whole roll. When you're printing your own, you can technically fit two 4 x 6s on one sheet and thus the cost per print drops to 45 cents.

The 690C is virtually identical to the 680C I have had for two months now, except for the redesigned seat for the black cartridge. In my tests, using both, I created a wall-calendar with a photo in the middle, I took images off the Net, and output pictures taken with a digital camera. I printed out each job with and without the photo-cartridge in place on different grades of paper. The output quality was by far the best-looking with the photo-kit on photo-paper.

## Hey, Mac

While I was impressed with the printer's performance, I have problems with HP's positioning of the product. First, the 690C is a Windows-only printer. I think, it's a mistake, because there are a lot of Macs in homes and other printer manufacturers do have dual-platform printers in this price-range.

Second, why on Earth would the company have two virtually identical products (the 680C and the 690C) on the market, one "photo-capable," the other not? The list price of the (optional) photo-kit, which includes a handy storage-box, is only \$86.86, marginally more than a regular replacement colour cartridge.

I paid \$450 for my 680C. The 690C (not yet in stock at the time of this writing) is going to be \$479.99 at one large retailer—too small a difference to keep both around. ♦

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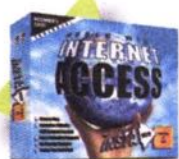


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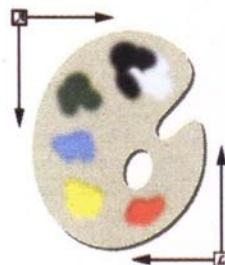
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# New contact manager editions amaze, disappoint

• • By JOHN MORRIS • •

If you've always wanted to be better organized, two major new products may be for you. Microsoft's *Outlook 97*, due to be released at the end of January, and Symantec's *ACT! 3.0*, available now, both offer computer owners terrific new tools for managing personal and group information.

Although there is sufficient overlap between the two products such that both can perform many of the other's functions, each has a different focus: *ACT!* is better at supporting information about relationships between a user and others outside an organization; *Outlook*, on the other hand, is focused more on managing personal and team information inside the bounds of an organization.

## ACT! misses its cue?

Users of Symantec's extremely popular *ACT!* have had to wait over two years for the Windows 95/Windows NT version of their

favourite contact manager. Despite Symantec's marketing genius, I think they've paid a price in lost market share for this delay.

The new version of *ACT!* is a complete rewrite of the product for 32-bit. Even so, existing *ACT!* users will find most of the functionality familiar. Individuals familiar with the older *ACT!*'s limitations will be happy to know that the new product has much better support for "organizations" and "projects."

Prospective *ACT!* users will want to consider that the product is beautifully integrated with *WinFax Pro* (which comes with the distribution CD) and with the ubiquitous MS Exchange e-mail platform (as well as MS Fax and other e-mail engines). *ACT!* continues to give good support for "lists," making it easy to manage mailings. For those individuals working on a LAN, the group database and calendar synchronization features are now included with the base product.

Individuals working as independent professionals or sales people will find that *ACT!*

3.0 gives them good results in most situations. If you want to use your information manager to perform serious project tracking, however, or if you are focused on tracking information by organization in addition to tracking information by individual, then you may find *ACT!* somewhat limiting.

In an exclusive interview, Symantec's *ACT!* product manager, Ryan Rosenberg, said that we could expect future versions of the product to support "opportunity management" and "organizations" explicitly, but that these features were supported now only through the "group" feature. For my part, because I am in industrial sales, I need a product which supports these features—opportunities and organizations—explicitly.

## Changing your Outlook?

In my ongoing search for the holy grail of industrial-strength contact management, I thought that Microsoft's new *Outlook 97* might be the "end of the road." Whatever doubts I may have about *Outlook*, the prod-

uct is an outstanding example of a new generation of software.

Based on the new "Office 97" interface, which you may have seen if you're using the latest version of *Internet Explorer*, *Outlook* is a powerful and even beautiful product that reflects the 25,000 hours and 500 site visits that the Microsoft interface research team performed during product development.

You might think of *Outlook* as a combina-

continued on page 35



*Outlook 97*, from Microsoft. Win95/NT CD-ROM. Approx. \$150.  
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## New contact manager editions...

continued from page 34

tion of *Exchange* and *Schedule Plus* on steroids. If you're not familiar with these products, *Outlook* is what Microsoft is calling a "desktop information manager." The product will track your e-mail, your contacts, your appointments, your documents and files, and your *personal* tasks (we'll get to why I've italicized "personal" in a moment). If you get stuck, the help system is very helpful, although some reviewers have found the cutesy animations to be annoying.

All of these things can be coordinated between users in a group LAN environment. Everything is also customizable by the end-user—and if that's not enough, you can make use of the common Visual Basic *Office 97* programming environment.

Going even further, if you work in a group environment and want to swap out the current database (the Jet-engine based Exchange PST file) for SQL Server or any other ODBC compliant database, you can do so later this spring when the "DAO" interface is released.

All this will be available for about \$150 in March. You can get the product before then if you acquire the new version of *Office 97* (upgrade to be available for about \$350 after January 16). I suspect some people—particularly those lucky ones with laptop computers—will just start "living in *Outlook*."

### Demanding

Given that this will be the first release of *Outlook*, you will naturally expect some limitations. The product does seem to require some horsepower to get a decent response time. I've run *Outlook* on both a 486 DX4/100 MHz computer and a Pentium notebook, and I noticed that it made real demands on both systems.

Another small issue some prospective users of *Outlook* may want to note is that the product is not self-sufficient when it comes to mail-merges. *Outlook* requires you to invoke *Access* for that purpose. Also, given that *Outlook* is an extremely rich environment, I suspect some *Outlook* users will find the learning curve to be fairly steep.

I have a bigger quibble with Microsoft concerning, coincidentally, almost the same issue I had with Symantec's *ACT!*. Out-of-the-box, *Outlook* is not very good at supporting information about "organizations."

Here is an example as to why this capability is probably very important for a lot of potential users. You start your day and want to prioritize your *Outlook* tasks. You decide to sort all your "things to do" by company. You find, however, that you can't do this. This is strange, because you've just added the "company" field to your task list—but all the fields are blank.

I spent some time with the Microsoft folks on the issue of the "missing company information"—given satisfaction I was prepared to anoint *Outlook* the category-killing app for contact managers and PIMs.

It seems, however, that organizational information, such as "company name," is not included in *Outlook* as a table, but merely as a descriptive text field, and that this information is not available in the all-important Task Manager. If you step back for a moment, you can see why this deficiency in

*Outlook* is rather glaring: you can keep track of all your work in *Outlook's* Task Manager—but you can't easily associate any of these tasks to the organizational beneficiaries of the work!

In other words, work in *Outlook* is only something you do for yourself or other individuals—organizations don't exist except as an afterthought—rather ironic considering the existence of Microsoft as a huge organization.

### What to buy

Here's a purchasing guide: if you have a powerful laptop and don't care about associating organizations with tasks, you might find *Outlook* meets all your needs. If you want a traditional, but updated contact manager, the new *ACT! Version 3.0* will do a very nice job. If, however, you really want a nice way of tracking organizations and tasks, but without the new 32-bit features, investigate alterna-

tives. You might want to go with my favourite contact manager, *Maximizer*, from Vancouver—a new 32-bit version of which will be released this spring. *Goldmine*, from Pacific Palisades, is another strong contender.

John Morris is with Open Sesame Systems and can be reached at 72144.723@compuserve.com or at (416) 781-0623. ♦

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• • By S.J. ROSS • •

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the Web Site Wizard helps users create Web sites, from page layouts based on one of three categories (business, personal, or community), to the automatic generation and insertion of HTML (hypertext markup language) codes.

## Drop me a line

Also new, the Postcard Wizard will help you create postcards handy for small mailings, such as announcements, and the Compliments Card Wizard will help you create the "With Compliments of" cards often included in packages.

Particularly clever are the context-sensitive Side-by-Side Help guides that remain conveniently open at the side of your document.

The most interesting feature of *Publisher 97* is the Design Checker. If Microsoft is correct, and *Publisher 97* is a "Designer in a Box," this is where the designer lives. Design Checker evolved from *Publisher 95*'s layout checker. While the layout checker identified basic problems, such as potential printing dilemmas, Design Checker locates complicated design and layout problems, such as double spaces after periods or too many fonts or colours, and offers suggestions for correcting these mistakes.

Although Design Checker can also review your Web page, identify potential errors

(such as an unlinked page), and offer suggestions for solving your problem, it cannot, unfortunately, automatically correct either Web-page or document errors.

While the Design Gallery includes hundreds of design elements, from mastheads to text styles (many of which can be used on your Web site), the design tools offer the most fun and flexibility. These range from object and text-rotation tools (allowing you to alter graphics and text up to 360 degrees), to word art (to change the appearance of text), gradient fills (to determine the degree of colour in any object), and a Fancy First Letter Gallery of drop caps (enlarged first letters).

Merge is a convenient feature available in many programs, especially word-processing programs, which allows you to either merge a single document, usually a letter, with a variety of addresses to create multiple documents, or to create a page of addresses that can be printed on a sheet of labels. While most word-processing packages have both the merge option and Avery label templates, if your package does not, then *Publisher 97*'s mail merge—which allows you to either create or import address lists from a variety of packages including *Word* and *Access* (although importing from non-Microsoft applications, such as *WordPerfect*, can be onerous)—is a handy

option for creating labels.

## Home, James

Although *Publisher 97* contains 20 categories of templates, because neither the software nor the manual provides advance illustrations of the templates, using *Publisher 97* is like entrusting yourself to an experienced driver—you hope they will take you where you want to go, but you are not allowed to judge for yourself until you get there.

While *Publisher 97* is not, as Microsoft would have us believe, "the Complete 'Designer in a Box' Solution," for SOHOs with the patience to learn a new program, the interest to keep abreast of design trends, the time to invest in designing their materials, and the need for newsletters, flyers, brochures, and other marketing materials, it is probably the next best thing. ♦



*Publisher 97*, from Microsoft. CD-ROM or 3.5-inch diskette. \$109 (SRP), with a \$30 rebate for previous users.

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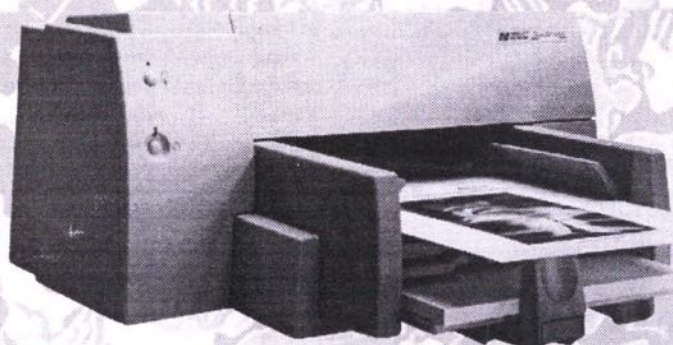


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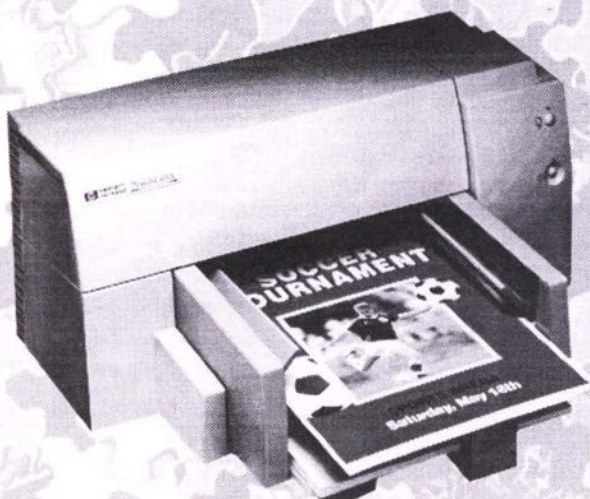
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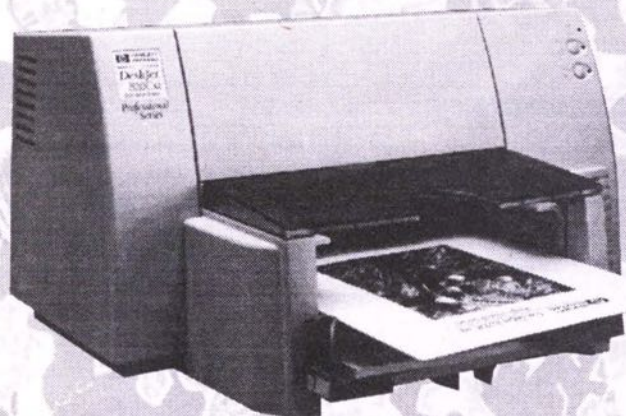
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# Take your ACT! on the road!

• • By ALAN THWAITS • •

There's another version of Symantec's ACT! contact manager available. In addition to the "regular size" ACT! for Windows, there's also a

"handheld" version ported for the Psion Series 3a/3c palmtop computer, developed by Yellow Computing of Germany.

First, a little background about the Psion. (A full review of the Psion Series 3a appeared in our

October 1996 issue). The Psion is a "pocketable" computer, offering full computing power in a portable format. The largest-selling palmtop in the world, it's long been a favourite of those who need computing power on the fly, including, quite naturally, people working in the sales and marketing fields.

Here's where ACT! comes in. Symantec's sophis-

ticated program has long been used by those who need to create and manage customized contact databases integrated with an activity scheduler and report generator. While ACT! for Windows is prime quality for those working out of their offices, the same people suffer somewhat when they have to go into the field, leaving desktop system, ACT!, and all that much-needed info behind. Then it's back to Daytimers, Post-It notes, and business card folders—and, in all probability, wasted time, lost contacts, and frustration!

## Think positive

Here's a more positive scenario: run ACT! on both desktop and palmtop machines, which pays off in efficiency and effectiveness. Before leaving the office, connect your desktop system to the Psion palmtop via Psion's handy serial cable link and PsiWin software. Load ACT! for Windows on your desktop machine, and open the database that's relevant to the day's work. Choose the "Import/Exchange" option from ACT!'s "File" menu, and then "Direct Link" from the subsequent submenu. Then it's simply a matter of choosing the appropriate settings from the "Direct Link Settings" dialogue box, and transferring the pre-selected database to the Psion.

Presto! Now you're ready to take your ACT! on the road! You can use ACT! on the Psion in exactly the same way as you would on the desktop: keeping a list of clients and your contacts with them, notes of conversations, analysing trends in client data, and having the Psion prompt you to call clients at certain times according to priority.

When you return to your desktop system, it's a simple matter of uploading the changed data to the ACT! for Windows program. Transferring and updating contact data between desktop and palmtop machines means you'll never be out of touch with the information you need.

The only downside is the sheer amount of information shown on the palmtop's screen. ACT! for the Psion uses a tiny font and three screens per contact. Resolution on the Psion's 480 x 160 LCD screen is excellent, but there's no zoom utility, so good eyesight is essential. On the program's plus side is an excellent online help utility, with triple-nested help menus and copious amounts of text.

If you're a Psion user unfamiliar with ACT!, you're probably better off with the machine's built-in Data application—it's ideally suited to the functionality of the handheld machine. If you already use ACT! on your desktop system, however, ACT! for the Psion may just be the tool you need to "paradigm shift" your contact-management efficiency. ♦

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# Create instant caricatures with **Let's Draw**

•• By ALAN ZISMAN ••

How many of you have had secret ambitions to be a cartoonist? Maybe you filled your high-school notebooks with sketches rather than class notes?

Okay. You can put your hands down now. *Let's Draw*, from Toronto's Microforum, may be what you've been waiting for all those years since high school. This Windows 3.1/95 software lets everyone create caricatures—whether they've got any artistic talent or not.

At its most basic, it's sort of the digitized version of Mr. Potato Head—pick a head, add a body, eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Add in a background, a voice bubble, some text, and you're ready to print out your cartoon and pin it up on the fridge or the office bulletin board.

With over 120 face-shapes alone, a vast number of cartoons are possible just using the pre-fab picture elements. You can also use one of the 50 templates, and use your cartoon for a fax cover, calendar, greeting card, wrapping paper or more.

## Who's who?

You even get about 100 ready-made caricatures of famous people—but don't expect to be able to use these to get a job as a political cartoonist for your daily newspaper. Aside from Chrétien, Mulroney, and Trudeau, the bulk are pop-culture figures, ranging from W.C. Fields to Madonna (if you're not good at recognizing who's being spoofed, don't expect any help from the program: the files are identified only by number, even in the Clip-Art Reference Guide).

You can customize the pre-fab elements, distorting and changing size or colour as desired. Drawing tools are included as well, allowing you to add your own features to the clip art, or to create a picture from scratch.

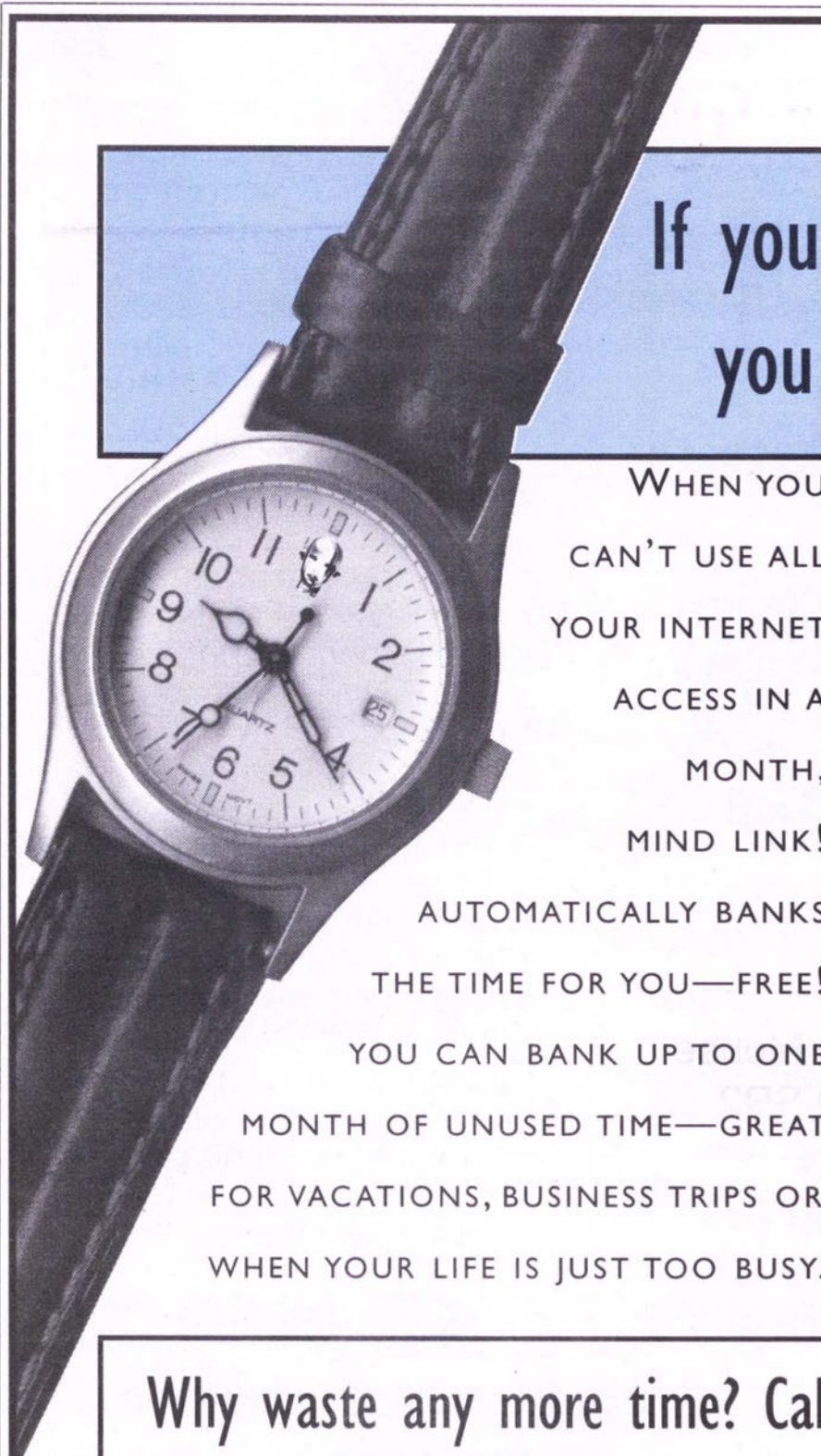
The program is a vector-draw program, similar to the popular *CorelDraw*—but simultaneously less powerful and easier to use. Lines can imitate charcoal or felt-pen, for more realistic effects. Like better-known draw programs, you can work freehand or with bezier lines, and zoom and rotate to your heart's content.

Image elements can be easily distorted, tapered, or skewed, and these effects can be applied to text as well as to the standard artwork. While the program, by default, saves files in its own format, artwork can be exported as standard BMP and WMF formats, so they can be used in word-processor or desktop-publishing files.

The program is a 16-bit Windows 3.1 application, but it installs nicely under Win 95 as well—even adding an uninstall option to the Win95 Control Panel list. It

can be set up to run from the CD disk or from your hard drive, taking between 5 and 29 MB of drive space, depending on the options selected.

*Let's Draw* is fun and easy to use for both novices and more sophisticated artists or computer users. ♦




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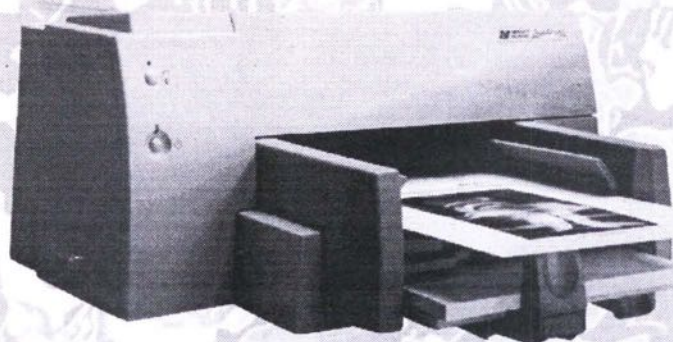


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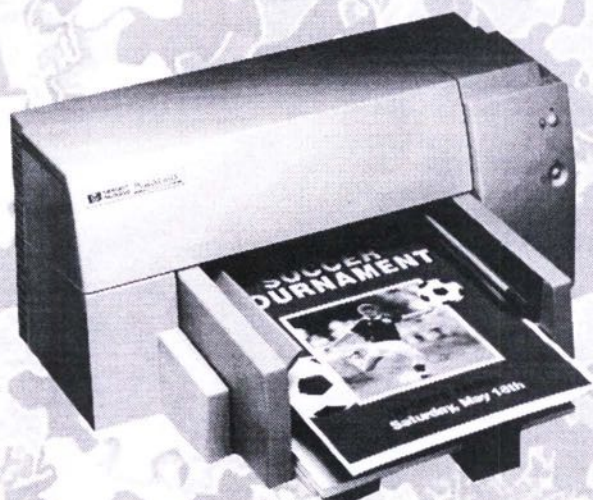
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# WebMania! and WebForms: Dynamic duo

•• By JUNE CAMPBELL ••

If you're a PC user with plans to develop a Web site or two, the software duo of *WebMania!* and *WebForms* is worth a look.

*WebMania!* is an HTML editor that features many of the bells and whistles we've come to expect, but at a fraction of the price (*Hotdog Pro*, for instance, currently sells for about US\$99). Like its more expensive counterparts, *WebMania!* offers multiple document usage, a Spell Checker (with the usual irritating tendency to stop for HTML tags), tables and lists, and easy-to-use wizards that make it a snap to create frames and client-side image maps.

## Special features

Sounds like just another editor so far, albeit cheaper than many, right? But wait. Several unique features make this software stand out.

First, *WebMania!* includes up to 60 user-programmable toolbar buttons, allowing you to change your tags as you learn new ones and/or as HTML standards evolve. Although we're wise to be skeptical of Q&D's statement that *WebMania!* will

therefore never become outdated, user-programmable buttons are not usually available in a Web editor.

The second outstanding feature is the *WebForms* forms wizard, sold separately or included as a feature of *WebMania!* *WebForms* allows you to create both mail to and CGI forms, easily and without the need to know CGI scripting or any other programming language. It also generates JavaScript, allowing scrolling messages on your forms, specification of required input fields, and confirmation messages upon form submission with mail to forms!

Your customized forms can include text fields, check boxes, radio buttons, images, list boxes, and hypertext links. With a few additional mouse clicks, you can develop a confirmation page, arrange for redirection upon submission, and more.

## Gathering made easy

Best of all, *WebForms* responses are automatically sent to your specified e-mail address, and can be imported directly from your POP3 mail server into an (included) database on a local hard drive. Once imported to the built-in data base, responses

can be read, printed, or exported to an HTML table on the Web. The database allows you to collect information generated from multiple forms, and sort the responses by form name. You have the option of reading New, Old, or All messages.

You can use these forms to conduct surveys or gather other data (i.e., names for a mailing list) or to collect customer orders. *WebForms* cannot create a "shopping cart" type of product, nor will it sum up and total prices or quantities of selected items. You will need a programmer or a more robust (read expensive) application if this is your requirement.

To use CGI forms, your server must have CGI capabilities, and you must provide the location of the Perl interpreter, the send-mail path, and the path to the directory in which your CGI scripts are to be stored.

An excellent online help and tutorial guides you through the entire process, providing sufficient information to permit someone with little experience to quickly generate an attractive and functional form.

*WebMania!* and *WebForms* install easily on Windows 3.x and Windows 95 systems,



*WebMania!*, from Q&D Software Development. For PC only. US\$49.95 (Pro version), US\$34.95 (Standard version).

*WebForms*, from Q&D Software Development. For PC only. US\$34.95 (Pro), US\$21.95 (Standard).

For more information, visit <http://www.q-d.com/>

but you will need VBRUN300.DLL (which can be downloaded from Q&D's site if you don't already have it). Registered users may expect an e-mail response to tech-support questions within 24 hours.

The verdict? An enthusiastic "thumbs up!" for this software, if you understand its limitations and plan accordingly.

June Campbell is the owner of Nightcats Multimedia Productions. You can reach her by e-mail at [June\\_Campbell@mindlink.bc.ca](mailto:June_Campbell@mindlink.bc.ca) or by phoning (604) 980-3219 during business hours. ♦

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## Software

# Use utilities to tune up your Win95 machine

• • By ALAN ZISMAN • •

If an operating system like Windows 95, OS/2, or the Mac OS is the engine that determines how your computer runs, then using utilities is like getting the oil changed, the engine tuned, or having an Automobile Association membership—with someone to call if the darn thing just won't start up.

As with a car, some of us will want to spend a lot of time fussing with getting it to look, feel, and run just the way we want, while others will be happy with it just the way it came from the factory, and will want to do the minimum—so long as it keeps running.

Windows 95 celebrated its first birthday on August 24—which is enough time for users to have discovered its strengths and weaknesses, and for software companies to release products to try and fill the perceived gaps. In fact, with a number of these products now into a second generation of release, it's a good time to take a look at some of what's available.

First of all, what's in the box? Like earlier versions of DOS and Windows, Win95 includes several utilities right in the package: DriveSpace 2 lets users compress their hard drives; Defrag optimizes disks, improving performance by putting fragmented files back together; and Scandisk checks for file system and physical errors.

While they all work as advertised, they're pretty basic versions (if you have nothing better, by all means, use them—in fact, use Defrag and Scandisk regularly). Unlike DOS 6, though, for example, Win95 includes no anti-virus program.

### Norton Utilities = peace of mind

Symantec's Norton Utilities package has, for years, provided industrial-strength tools, first for DOS, then for Windows.

Their Win95 version has just been released as a new version 2.0, which supports Microsoft's new FAT32 for hard disks larger than 2 gigabytes. It continues to provide a strong set of replacements for many of the core Win95 utilities.

SpeedDisk, in particular, is much more functional than Microsoft's Defrag, allowing users to

sort folders and files, for example, and, by optimizing the swap file, improve performance.

I'm not convinced, however, that Norton Disk Doctor is much of an improvement over Win95's built-in Scandisk.

Norton beefs up Recycle Bin for users who delete files from the DOS prompt—the standard Recycle Bin does not provide any protection for those files. Included DOS versions of many utilities provide protection against the possibility that Win95 just won't start. While many users won't need to use most of this package regularly, its major benefit is to provide peace of mind—knowing that its protection is on hand in case anything major goes wrong.

### Microsoft's Plus!—or minus?

Released at the same time as the core Win95 package, Microsoft's Plus! package includes an odd mix of useful bits and fluff. DriveSpace 3 lets users create compressed partitions as big as 2 GB, compared to the 512 MB limit for the stan-

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## Software

### Use utilities to tune up your ...

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standard DriveSpace. It can also be used to minimize drive space lost to cluster slack. With big, cheap hard disks, however, drive compression is much less necessary. System Agent runs in the background, automatically running other utilities such as ScanDisk or Defrag, at set times when the computer is otherwise idle.

Aside from these, Plus! consists of cute frills only—desktop themes that provide sets of sounds, icons, and wallpaper; a nice pinball game; an obsolete version of the *Internet Explorer* Web browser (the current version can be obtained for free from <http://www.microsoft.com/>). For most users, this is not a must-buy.

Every Win95 user, however, should get a copy of Microsoft's free PowerToys. This collection of mini-utilities is available at <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/software/PowerToy.htm> and was written by Win95 programmers in their, no doubt, copious free time.

The TweakUI utility is, perhaps, the most useful. It adds itself to the Control Panel, and allows users to tweak the Win95 desktop and boot process. The SendTo utility makes copying and moving files with Explorer or My Computer much more efficient.

While at Microsoft's Web site, go to <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/software/updates.htm> and check for the latest patches and updates. Some are only needed with obscure hardware combinations, but they're well described—if any look useful, get them and apply them.

### Little byte lies?

Microsoft claims that Win95 can run on a machine with as little as 4 MB of RAM. That's true—sort of. It will install and start up, but "run?"

Win95 starts to be usable at 8 MB of RAM, and 16 MB allows fairly reasonable performance. Even with the recent drop in RAM prices, many users still have 8 MB installed, and many notebook users are stuck with machines that remain difficult or expensive to upgrade.

RAM compression software has been popular, and reasonably effective on the Macintosh platform for several years—and several such products were released late in 1994 for Windows 3.1, and later Win95. Many users felt that the products did not perform as promised, however. In fact, market leader *SoftRam 95* was taken off the shelves, after impartial reviews suggested that it did little or nothing.

*Helix Hurricane* doesn't promise to "double your RAM." It does, however, use compression technology to effectively increase Windows performance (both Win 3.1 and Win95 versions are included in the package). It does this by finding little-used pieces of memory (on your video card, for example), and using these for a compressed RAM cache to be used prior to the swap disk on your hard drive. Normally, when it runs low on RAM, Windows uses the swap disk space, which is much slower than real RAM. By using its cache first, *Hurricane* provides more effective RAM, with better performance.

Desktop Win95 users with 8 MB of standard RAM will be better off simply buying more RAM

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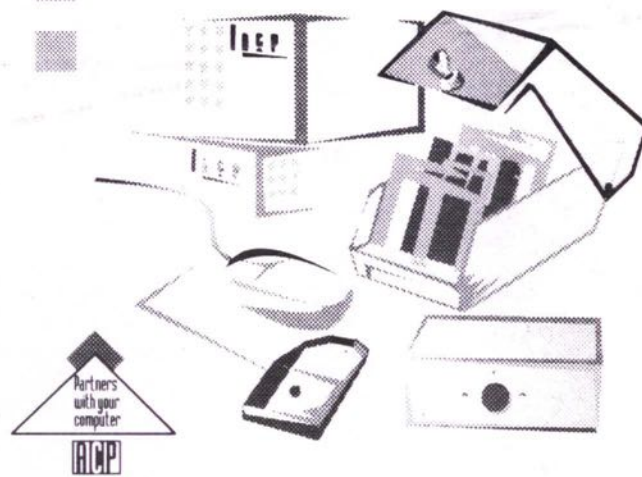
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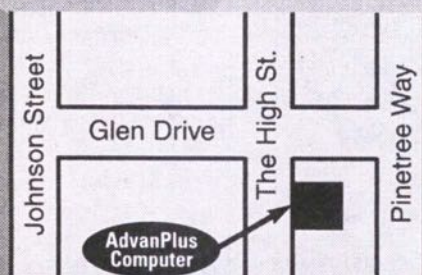


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## Software

Use utilities to tune up your ...  
continued from page 43

before prices rise again. Notebook users, faced with higher prices, may want to give this product a look.

### It's flu season

Computer viruses are back—in a new form. Macro viruses, originally affecting *Microsoft Word* documents, but now in varieties for *Microsoft Excel* and other products, are accounting for increasing proportions of infections. Unlike traditional viruses, these can infect your system through an infected document, and some forms can be spread between Macs and PCs.

For that reason, it's more important than ever to get a virus checker, and to ensure that it's frequently updated to cope with the latest infections. Last year's model simply isn't very useful.

The new version 2.0 of Symantec's *Norton AntiVirus (NAV)* for Win95 (also available in Windows 3.1, WinNT, and Macintosh versions) has a neat feature (shared with the latest *Norton Utilities*). With Live Update, a single-click logs onto Symantec's BBS or Web site, checks for any new virus definitions, downloads, and installs the update. By making it easier to keep the utility up to date, it makes virus infections more unlikely.

Despite this big plus, it's difficult to recommend NAV without qualification. Competitor McAfee, creator of the popular shareware *VirusScan* (available in DOS, Win 3.1, and Win95 versions) has taken Symantec to court. McAfee suggests that Symantec advertising, claiming that

NAV recognizes and removes the most macro viruses, is misleading—that, in fact, independent tests show that *VirusScan* removes more of the viruses that are actually found "in the wild."

Some people wear both belts and suspenders. With viruses, there's no such thing as too safe—get several products, and use and update them regularly.

### What's left?

We haven't covered anywhere near all available products—there are at least 200 Win95 utility packages. We haven't even mentioned all product categories, not even what's available in the Win95 box. We will be running additional reviews of other utilities products in upcoming issues. ♦

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# Watch out for bad macros!

I had just finished filing an article to this publication when the phone rang and Mara asked me, "Did you know about the Macro?"

• • By BRANDI JASMINE • •

Macro? Uh-oh. I scrambled through my files, sweeping and cleaning, and thankfully, this time, avoided a disaster. Like many computer users, I'd heard of macros, but had not paid much attention to the files I downloaded from e-mail or Web sites, until it was too late.

"Macros" are features in word-processing programs (*Word* or *WordPerfect*, for example) that automate functions. They were designed to reduce the need for commonly-repeated keystrokes, but anti-social individuals have created macros that can damage data and programs. They infect documents, not executable programs (as most viruses do), and they are rapidly becoming the most common form of viral infection—probably because they are simpler to create than their executable cousins.

## Some tips

Insist that Internet correspondents send

messages as plain-text e-mail. There is seldom

a real need for word processing and font faces in most e-mail communication. Accept DOC or WP\* attachments only from those people you know and trust, and check them immediately for macros. They may never intentionally send you a bad macro, but they may not be cautious, until, like me, they have already experienced an infected document. Immediately erase any unsolicited document that comes as an attachment, especially if it has a saucy headline.

Tell your e-mail companions that they can easily import word-

processed files to their Windows-based programs. Open your word processor and e-mail program. You can hit ALT-TAB to move between the programs. In the word processor, highlight the text you wish to copy, then click on File, Copy. ALT-TAB to the e-mail program, and click on File, Paste. *Viola!* No attachment required.

If you think you have been infected by a

macro, you may have to check all your documents for infection. In *Word*, click on Tools, then Macro, and delete any macros you may find in "All Active Templates." That will prevent further spread of the macro, but check your stored documents first. There are no macros in the default settings, so delete them all if you have not created them yourself.

## Get protection

The ON Guard Firewall Center (<http://www.on.com/>) is a Web site dedicated to protecting your network from Internet hackers.

You can learn about Internet security risks, the techniques hackers use, and how to protect your network. They have a program called VirusTrack that installs as a plug-in to *Word*, which can scan every document on your PC or Novell-based network.

The program is extremely user-friendly, and can sit silently in the background, checking *Word* documents as they are opened, or it can be set to scan the complete drive. A start-up scan took approximately ten minutes during a test, but successfully found the "Concept" Macro on several files that were believed to be clean. There is no loss of data and no trace left of the virus.

VirusTrack checks for Wazzu, Concept (also known as "Prank"), "Nuclear," and "FormatC." The current version of VirusTrack does not check for unknown virus types, but updates are available to registered owners for a period of one year. The program is a little pricey (\$520 for a ten-user licence), but it may be worth it for network administrators who want something simple and integrated for their less-experienced users. "Office 97 will share macros across the suite," points out ON Technology spokesman Steve Guthrie. "It's gonna be really nasty when macros written for *Word* begin to operate in *Excel* and *Powerpoint*." ♦

They infect documents, ...and they are rapidly becoming the most common form of viral infection

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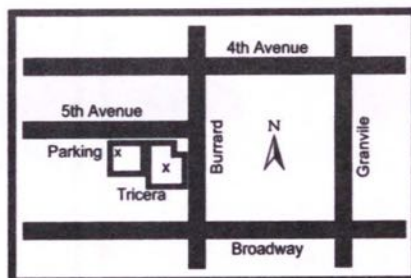
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## Feature

# Big firms snapping up bright Canadians

• • By CHRISTOPHER GULY • •

The University of Waterloo has become somewhat of a "superstore" for companies looking for highly skilled high-tech employees.

Recent figures show that the university produces one-third of Canada's math graduates and one-fifth of the country's computer scientists. Not surprisingly, the campus has become the recruitment focus for major North American firms. Starting with Microsoft Corp. in 1991, which runs its largest co-op program at the Ontario campus, the U of Waterloo has seen corporate human-resources types tripping over themselves to grab grads within minutes of convocation.

In 1995, 30 US firms came calling. This year, 100. One, San Jose-based Cypress Semiconductors Inc., hired its first students five years ago. This year, according to the *Ottawa Citizen*, 184 Waterloo students applied for 5 co-op positions at the company's memory chip-design centre in northeastern Mississippi.

From now on, says Randy Hiltbold, head of the design centre, "we'll be there every year."

Besides an industry-wide belief that Canadian high-tech specialists are better than their US counterparts, a depleting personnel supply in the face of growing demand has American companies flocking north of the border. For instance,

the number of computer-science graduates in Canada and the United States is 25,000, down by 5,000 since 1989. Of that total, about 3,500 are Canadian grads from applied and computer sciences, as well as electrical, electronic, and computer engineering.

In Canada, Nortel takes about 700 of the grads, while the rest are shared between such industry heavyweights as Corel Corp., Mitel Corp., and Newbridge Networks Corp. Still, the number of available technical bodies is not nearly enough to fill the huge number of software-related job vacancies in Canada.

### Too many jobs?

According to the Ottawa-based Software Human Resources Council, 20,000 positions remain unfilled. That shouldn't be a surprise, with many of Canada's newly employable high-techies being lured south of the border—where currency-exchange rates make starting salaries more appealing. In many cases, Canadian computer science grads start with a US\$50,000 salary, compared to the Canadian standard in the high Can\$30,000 range.

Most US companies typically sweeten the deal for Canadian recruits by throwing in such incentives as reimbursable relocation expenses, paying for US work permits, and opportunities to buy into corporate stock plans. ♦

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# Authors' BookFest

• • By ALAN THWAITS • •

The writers for *Canada Computes!* and *The Computer Paper* are a talented and prolific bunch. As well as bringing you the latest news and reviews in the computing and online worlds, some of them have also been busy writing books. Others are, as we speak, involved in the creative process, with publication dates and titles soon to be announced.

In this "occasional feature," we're going to keep you up-to-date on what's happening with our writers. That way, you will (hopefully) pester the owner of your favourite computer bookstore to get these books, and, at the same time, add valuable resources to your computer library.

In the first article in this series, we'll look at three books covering the online world—two on HTML and Web design, and one on Internet gaming.

## Here's looking at you

*Looking Good Online* aims to give present and prospective Web-Masters the design smarts they need to attract and keep visitors to their sites.

To do this, Steve Bain and Daniel Gray take a three-part approach. Section 1, "Contemplating a Web Site," examines the purpose of the proposed or existing site, and offers basic guidelines for content creation (including the all-important issues of copyright protection and getting permission to use content created by others).

Section 2, "Designing a Web Site," gets to the heart of the matter.

Here, Bain and Gray cover the basics (theme, backgrounds, the integration of text and graphics, and navigation), move to advanced design features (forms, tables, frames, animated graphics, and the cascading style sheets used by Microsoft's Internet Explorer 3.0), and conclude with

an annotated list of the most common design mistakes.

Section 3 is extremely useful: titled "Professional Web Site Design," it consists of detailed case studies of five successful commercial Web sites, including those of FedEx, the NFL, and the White House.

The companion CD-ROM includes a healthy mix of Macintosh and Windows 3.x/95 software—sufficient Web-authoring tools, icons, image editors, and utilities to keep you busy for weeks.

## Faithful companion

*The Advanced HTML Companion*, by Keith Schengili-Roberts (who writes the "Weaving Your Own Web Site" column in *The Computer Paper*, our sister publication), is exactly what its title suggests: a full-featured reference work for the experienced Web designer.

Although its cover states that it will "appeal to beginners who want a good grounding in HTML," only two brief chapters delve into HTML basics. The other seven chapters—and four appendices—cover the meaty stuff of HTML in a concise and clear fashion. The most recent extensions for both Netscape Navigator 3.0 and Internet Explorer 3.0, as well as the integration of such development technologies as ActiveX, Java, JavaScript, and VBScript, are well explained.

Along the way, Schengili-Roberts has a good look at required design features, such as forms, CGI scripting, tables and frames, style sheets, and multimedia. This book will deservedly find a place on the professional WebMaster's bookshelf!

## Let the games begin

The last (but certainly not least) volume in this month's "Authors' BookFest" is the

*Internet Games Directory* by Marc Saltzman and Sean McFadden. First, the book

outlines what kind of games are available on the Net, offers detailed tips on how to search cyberspace for games and game

resources, and explains the various kinds of gaming options one can find online. A "Web Directory of Games" follows, divided into action, adventure, collectible-card, role-playing, simulation, strategy, sports, and board/card/puzzle categories.

Saltzman and McFadden then take us to game-related FTP sites and Usenet newsgroups, so that the dedicated gamer has the entire Net at his or her disposal. The book's companion CD-ROM comes with an HTML version of the book, *Internet Explorer* (in Win 95, 3.x, NT, and Mac versions), the *Netcom NetCruiser* browser (Windows), shareware versions of *Doom 1.9* and *Quake*, and a demo version of *MechWarrior 2*. A definite bonanza for both beginning and addicted gamers! ♦

info  
box

*Looking Good Online*, by Steve Bain and Daniel Gray, from Ventana Press. Includes Windows/Mac CD-ROM. 1-56604-469-3. \$55.99.

*Internet Games Directory*, by Marc Saltzman and Sean McFadden, from Que Books/Lycos Press. Includes Windows/Mac CD-ROM. 0-7897-1055-2. \$42.95.

*The Advanced HTML Companion*, by Keith Schengili-Roberts, from AP Professional. 0-12-623540-6. \$29.95.



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# The Internet hiccups and the world catches its breath

## Rumours of the Internet's imminent death abound

•• By CARLIE ORESKOVICH ••

The hollow sound of silence as millions of users put such a strain on the system that wires smoke, servers overheat, and the entire system implodes makes good copy, but users are what the Internet is all about. It is designed to be able to redirect traffic through a network. Granted, it wasn't designed for the sheer volumes of use seen today, but by and large, it still works and will continue to do so.

When it doesn't work, it's news and the strains of its popularity are showing, especially on the phone system, which itself is coming perilously close to gridlock as phone lines are tied up. In some areas, such as California, this means fewer calls are going through on the first try, there are more busy signals, and access may be blocked out altogether. During the US presidential election, the crush of voters logging on to check on returns made some of the sites virtually inaccessible for hours at a time.

Chris Fortin, of GlobalServe in Oakville, Ontario, says the problem involved weak points in the system. Because it is such a large network, there are always going to be portions that aren't engineered to the same level of performance as the others.

He suggests that the problem could have been handled with a multicast arrangement, distributing the load, and shuffling requests, thereby dividing the load among almost any number of

machines. Another solution he recommends is caching, in which the client server holds copies of things that they've already used, while new information is processed.

### Online China syndrome?

The "Melt Down" scenario some have predicted is exaggerated, says Rolando Oliver of Bell Telephone. The Internet is a set of Nets, all of them connected by a backbone, and the backbone has been upgraded significantly, both in Canada and the United States.

In Canada, the Internet is based on Asynchronous Traffic Mode (ATM), the next generation of switches, which will be able to carry all types of traffic, including broadband traffic. He notes that because of the upgrading, the Canadian system will have less chance of overloading.

This is not to say that it won't, but the network is now more resilient than the rest of the Internets in the world.

### Yak yak yak

The raw numbers aren't the only problem. The weight of material on the line is another source of difficulty. Internet users stay on the line longer than voice callers. Pacific Telesis in California found that the average Internet call takes 20 minutes, compared to 4 minutes for the average phone call. As well, 10 per cent of Internet calls were at least six hours long. Use goes up even more with flat rates.

Rod McKay, partner-in-charge of Information Technology, KPMG Canada, feels the main problem with the structure of the Internet is that it is a system that, fundamentally, no one owns. No one, therefore, takes responsibility for its operation, management, and so on.

The Canadian system, because of its upgrades, seems to have more strength and integrity than the US system, but the nature of the Internet really blurs that distinction. McKay notes speed is a factor. People are disappointed in their ability to get information and get information that is right for them.

He notes that the system will certainly be pushed to the limit, with more people trying to get online, putting more information onto more Web sites, and not getting what they want. Nevertheless, he believes the system will adapt.

Fortin, the 22-year-old owner of the two-year-old GlobalServe, suggests that it is up to the person providing the service on Internet to look for a hosting solution, one which provides a service that is robust, responds, works, and has the up time and the reliability that users want.

### Here's your lunch bill

It appears to many people that the Internet is free, says Bell's Oliver, outlining the provider view. It really isn't, however, although at this point users are getting a free ride in the telephone network.

Rick Broadhead, coauthor of *The Canadian*

*Internet Handbook*, says new hardware may continue increasing capacity, but at some point you reach a limit. He notes that some say the free ride is going to be over very soon. With flat rate Internet access becoming more prevalent, however, I don't buy that argument—yet. I don't think you will have to pay per minute use.

People who argue that the telephone company cannot sustain the traffic levels we see say the phone companies are going to turn around and charge Internet providers higher rates to get Internet connections, and the providers will then have to charge the users more.

Tom Healey, president of Technology Launch Initiative, a new venture itself, says he does not know if the Internet can be crippled to the point of non recoverability. It seems to be a very survivable environment. I think we can choke it and basically choking it gives end users frustration but doesn't seem to physically hurt the network infrastructure and I know you can fill services and you can flame people and do all kinds of malicious little things, but it seems to be quite survivable as a general network fabric.

One thing that is threatened is that the structure of access will be changed and a tiered system of services may be introduced, which will have an increased cost attached to it, says Healey. ♦

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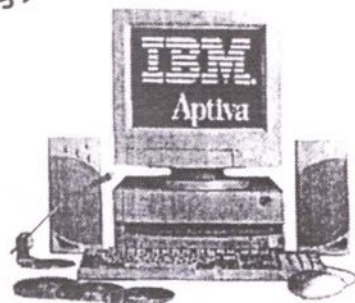
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# Welcome to the World Wide Web

•• By DAVID ROSEN ••

In the previous installment of this series, we explored the Internet in general. This time we're delving into the World Wide Web.

The World Wide Web, often shortened to "The Web," is the name given to the spiffy, multimedia part of the Internet.

Unlike the decades-old Internet, the Web is relatively new. Until recently, only techno-geeks knew anything about the Internet or the Web. Nowadays, however, people you meet at parties ask for your URL instead your phone number. Looked at a business card recently? You'll probably find that ubiquitous "http://www...". Is the entire planet on the Web? Why is the Web so popular?

First of all, millions of North Americans have personal computers. Just about every computer sold these days comes with a modem and communications software pre-loaded. Furthermore, Internet service providers (ISPs) are all over the place, offering low-cost, unlimited access and the promise of a brave new world. So much for access, but *why* are people so interested in using the Web?

## Fear and Greed

Cynics believe there are two motivators in life: Fear and Greed. The Internet in general (and the Web in particular) is no different. Many companies don't have the slightest (rational) need for a Web site but they want to appear "high tech." They use their URL (that's *Uniform Resource Locator*—their Web address) in traditional advertising, expecting no one to visit their site. The same can be said for many individuals who are afraid to appear behind the times.

Online sales and advertising promote the Greed aspect. In one interesting example, nearly 500,000 people were induced to call a toll-free number by visiting a beer maker's Web site. They answered a lengthy series of questions including their names,

addresses, and drinking habits...just for a chance at winning a \$30 beer cooler! What a devilish marketing tool! The fact that it worked made it all the more incredible!

The Web was based on HyperText, a language later popularized in Apple's HyperCard. Unlike hierarchical-based search systems that require "climbing" up

## Traveling the World Wide Web

Here are a few Web sites to begin your journey

### Fun

Disney: <http://www.disney.com>  
Great Outdoors: <http://www.gorp.com>  
Much Music: <http://muchmusic.com>

### Schools and Education

Library of Congress:  
<http://lcweb.loc.gov>  
PBS Online: <http://www.pbs.org>  
TV Ontario: <http://www.tvo.org>

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Canada Computes!: <http://www.canadacomputes.com>  
Microsoft: <http://www.microsoft.com>

Graphic by David Rosen and Image Club



## What is the Web—and who thought it up?

The Web was formally proposed in 1989 by Tim Berners-Lee, a researcher at CERN, the European Laboratory for Particle Physics in Switzerland. The Web was originally designed as a research tool to allow seamless access to different computers across the Internet. Previously, a university researcher who needed to retrieve information from another computer system across the Internet was forced to battle unfamiliar interfaces, data-format differences, and other compatibility problems.

to a root directory, then traveling back down another leg of the search tree, HyperText lets you quickly jump to the information you need. (By the way, the "http" in every Web address tells your browser you want to use HyperText Transfer Protocol to look at a particular site.)

Development of the Web concept continued and the first browser, known as "WWW," was released in 1991. Two years later, Marc Andreessen, then with the University of Illinois, released the initial version of the world's first commercial

## Finding a needle in a haystack

Sometimes it seems as if there are more Web sites out on the Internet than there are stars in the sky. The following search engines (Web-based computer search programs) are some favorites.

### Yahoo

<http://www.yahoo.com/>  
Arguably the easiest Web search engine available.

### Lycos

<http://www.lycos.com/>  
The oldest—and some would say the most venerable—of the popular search engines.

### Alta Vista

<http://www.altavista.digital.com/>  
Digital's easy-to-use, but surprisingly complete search engine.

### MetaCrawler

<http://metacrawler.com/>  
This one searches other Web search software tools and removes the duplicates it finds.

browser, named *Mosaic*. The rest, as they say, is history. Andreessen went on to become a co-founder of Netscape, maker of the world's most popular browser, *Netscape Navigator*.

## Why is the Web so flaky?

So if the Web had such a strong scientific background, why is it still so flaky? And to whom can you complain when you get

continued on page 51

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## SITES

**D**esperately seeking cybersites. We want to know (in 50 words or less) who to visit on the Net, and why. Send your cyberprose to [lara@tcpon.com](mailto:lara@tcpon.com)

I surfed the Net this month in search of Valentine's Day sites to prepare you readers for February 14. So, even if you are busy working long hours in front of a monitor, take some time out (when the boss isn't looking) and send your Valentine a free e-card, take the love test, or search for a good video to watch that night.

LARA THAIS KING

[http://www.allmovie.com/amg/movie\\_root.html](http://www.allmovie.com/amg/movie_root.html)

With the All-Movie Guide site, you can get ideas for movies to rent on Valentine's Day. You can browse moods or genres, and search by title or actor.

<http://www.valentine.com/>

The Love at First site is full of goodies for hopeless romantics. Got relationship problems? Diana, the love goddess, and the Love Mechanic are there to help. Find romantic cards, dating dilemmas, and classic love letters written by the likes of Shakespeare, Browning, and Dickinson.

<http://www.topchoice.com/~psyche/lovetest/>

Try the love test. Choose either the concept of love or experience of love version, then get your results. The scale is made up of 68 items that describe love.

<http://www.ftd.com/>

Get flowers for your special Valentine. The FTD site will provide you with info on sending arrangements in North America and abroad, local florists, and a catalogue of products.

<http://www.hallmark.com/>

Send your love a cybercard. Hallmark offers free electronic greeting cards that you can send to someone special.

<http://giftsontheweb.com/>

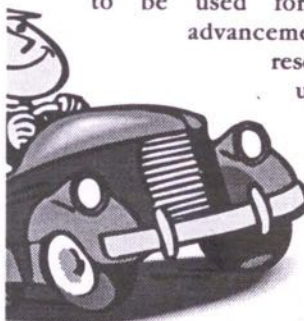
Looking for a gift to buy? This site sells gifts like jewellery, chocolate, and even picnic baskets. Just remember, folks, this cyberstore uses US funds. ♦

## Welcome to the World Wide Web...

continued from page 50

those weird error messages or you can't find a site you *know* exists?

Well, the Web is rather flaky because it's being used for a purpose for which it was never intended. It was supposed to be used for educational advancement; for research between universities and like-minded organizations. It was *not* designed to promote beer or broadcast news or soap operas to the masses (er, that's us, folks).



We get error messages because there are often too many people using the Web at the same time and the computers, communication equipment, or phone network can't keep up with the traffic.

Added to this problem is the fact that Web users don't want to pay more than \$20 or \$30 a month for Internet and Web

access. This means that many service providers can't afford to actively buy more equipment to cope with the traffic. The result: service suffers.

Things are changing rapidly, however, and heavy-duty users are starting to take matters into their own hands. For example, there is already a serious proposal on the table for a completely new (and super fast) Internet.

## So what's next?

This year we'll see an acceleration in the "Battle of the Browsers" between Netscape and Microsoft. For the benefit of those not (yet) on the Web, browsers are software packages that let you access the Web. A recent product review in a major US magazine found the two main browsers to be just about identical with respect to features and compatibility. While Netscape's *Navigator* was given a slight technological advantage over Microsoft's *Internet Explorer*, it's difficult to imagine that Microsoft won't spend millions in marketing dollars to win the whole pie (as usual).

In the next installment of this series, we'll be talking about e-mail and online chat. Stay tuned—and online—for further developments! ♦

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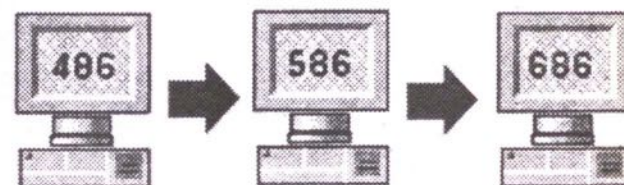
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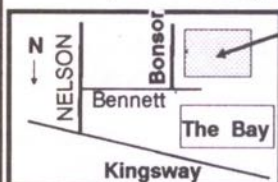


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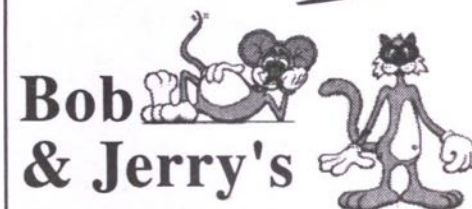
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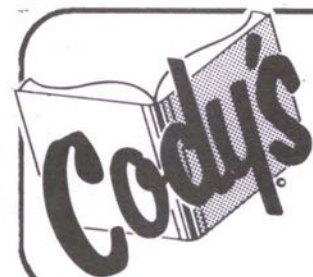
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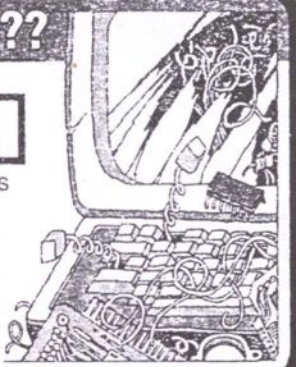
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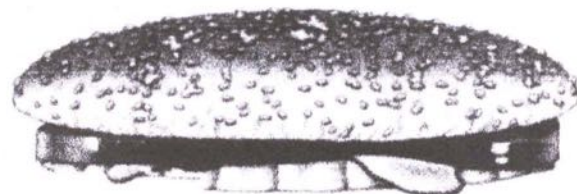
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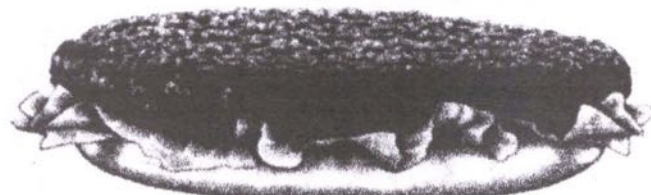
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# 電腦網路的傳輸

作者：林啓清(JimLin)

## 一、前言

慣見的資訊傳輸方法，基本上兩種同時在運作著：一種是有線網路，像電話、有線電視、區域網路與寬域網路等；另一種則是無線網路，像電視、廣播或衛星傳訊。由於每種方法皆有其優點，所以在實際的應用上，慣會混用多種方法，來盡量利用每種方法的優點！

網際網路(Internet)這個世紀熱門話題，當然更與資訊脫不了關係囉！如果您有用過臺灣的網際網路(或在尖峰時段連上溫哥華當地的ISP)，您就會知道整個網路的速度已經慢到什麼樣的程度了.....如果，您是一位網際網路的新手，也許您還感覺不到網際網路的慢(快慢都是比較出來的)，但只要您繼續用.....一直用，您一定會覺得，為什麼網路會越來越慢？基本上，網際網路是由許多一段一段的線路以接力的方式連在一起，只要其中主要的一段出了問題，在此段之後的所有用戶都會全部出問題的？好難哦.....不會啦.....讓筆者用比較簡單的方法來說明一下這個前因後果：

K-T-A-B-C-D-E-F-G-H-I-J 上面的每個英文字代表一個國家，假設代表臺灣，A代表美國，G代表德國，F代表法國，J代表日本，K代表韓國，其他沒有提到的英文字也各代表一個國家。假設T(臺灣)到(美國)這段專線(一條永遠連在一起的線路)斷掉了，那麼K就沒有辦法透過T連到A，也就是在韓國的用戶都沒有辦法連到美國，但卻可以連到臺灣(T)？

當然，韓國連到美國的線路可能不只透過臺灣這一條(可能有好幾條透過不同的途徑)，斷了一條還可以從別條出去，但整個網路的交通就變得比原來擁擠了？但是，如果韓國連到美國的線路只有透過臺灣這一條，當臺灣本身內部線路過於忙碌時，也會大大影響到韓國的用戶連到美國、法國、德國、日本？至於線路為什麼會斷，那變數就更多了？因為前面筆者也提到目前資訊的傳播大多採用混用不同傳播媒介的方法。所以，您想可能從韓國千里迢迢拉一條電線接到臺灣去？當然不可能！所以這中間可能透過衛星及數以百計的數據交

換機，任何一個點有問題，都可能造成線路中斷？

## 二、傳輸媒介的變革

利用有線網路來傳送資料，目前約有三種較新的方式在進行著？

ISDN(Integrated Service Digital Network)一般的電話線路傳送的是類比信號，所以傳輸的速度一直快不起來。而ISDN是指在更換電話線路的情況下，把電信局端的所有硬體設備都更換，改為全面數據化的環境。由於更換這些設備的費用驚人，不可能一下全改裝，所以都是一個區域一個區域慢慢改？也由於電信局端的交換機全面改裝，所以一般的使用客戶的設備也要更著改成ISDN專用電話、ISDN傳真機等。

如果是您，您願意再去買一部售價昂貴的ISDN電話機(因為銷售數量少，所以價錢貴)，當然不願意.....這就是ISDN推了十幾年，還這麼多人不知道的原因？網路間有許多關於ISDN的笑話，如I Still Don Need來消遣ISDN的高科技。現在由於Internet的發達，終於讓ISDN有嶄露頭角的機會。雖然ISDN依舊使用一般的電話線路，但它有三個通道，也就是二B一D。二B就是64K的兩個通道來接上兩部電腦，同時來上Internet，而速度就高達64K(與目前數據機的33.6K比)。如果您合併兩個B通道，那速度就變成128K(但這要您的ISP支援)，是不是很酷呀？可能有讀者會問，那那個一D是做什麼的？——就是接到電信局那端囉！您可以一邊用一個通道來上Internet，然後用另外一個通道來接上一個數據電話機(ISDN專用)打電話跟朋友聊天。用ISDN還有一個好處是，由於用的是數據傳輸，所以講話較不容易有干擾的情況發生。ISDN的好處很多，但壞處就是會對不起先生，因為所有的設備都還蠻貴的.....對了，用ISDN來上Internet可以不需要數據機了，只要用一片ISDN卡就可

以了(一般稱為TA)。

目前有些大廠的數據機本身有模擬TA的功能，如USR及ZyXEL等(價錢當然會比一般的數據機貴)。

DSL(Digital Subscriber Lines)，ISDN才開始要風光，又跑出來一個DSL來搶鏡頭，真是I Still Don。DSL可以利用目前的雙絞線電話線路，將線路頻寬由原來的3K提升到6至8Mbps。6M約是6000K，是ISDN128K的幾倍呀？這下ISDN還搞啥？DSL的原理跟ISDN差不多，也是要把電信局端的終端交換設備換掉，換成DSL式的交換機就對了？如果是ADSL(Asymmetrical Digital Subscriber Lines)的話，下傳速度可以高達9M，上傳速度則變為640K，屬於非對稱式的協定。

事實上，當您連上Internet時，大部份的時間您都是在下傳資料(看資料就是下傳資料的一種)，真正上傳的機會反而是少之又少？用戶端所使用的設備也是一種類似數據機的東西(據說一部高達一千美元以上)。

目前在美加地區已有數家通訊廠商開始提供試用。另外，還有一種叫HDSL(High Data Rate Digital Subscriber Lines)的方式。同樣是在不更換現有電話線的情況下，讓速度高達1040K這樣的高速(對稱式傳輸)。如果是以兩條電話線，則速度可以高達2048K，連目前的T1線路都要為之遜色？還沒完咧！還有一種叫VDSL(Very High Data Rate Digital Subscriber Lines)的方式，只利用一條現成的電話線，就可以讓速度高達60M，而且是雙向等速的哦！

Cable在美加地區，幾乎每戶都有接Cable TV？由於Cable是一直接連在每個用戶的家中，而且是隨時都可以提供服務(只要您開電視)。不像電話，必須撥了某個號碼，您的電話才會被接通。所以，如果能利用Cable來當Internet的資料傳輸媒介的話，那我們



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豈不是可以隨時都可以即時收電子郵件(只要您的電腦開著)了?沒錯,用Cable來傳Internet的資料真是酷呆了!但Cable公司就頭痛了?因為用來傳輸電視信號的Cable,當初只是設計用來傳送單向的資料,而無法接收由用戶所傳來的大量資料。如果要讓Cable上能承載數據信號,Cable公司那邊的機房可能又要大興土木了?

用戶端這邊並不是把Cable往電腦一接就連上Internet了?而需要向Cable公司租用一個叫Cable Modem的東西,Cable Modem則接到一片網路卡,網路卡則插到您的電腦裡面去。哈!要插...插...插卡?許多人聽到又要插卡,就開始緊張了,因為每次一插新卡,電腦就會出問題,不是這裡衝到,就是那裡衝到,最後電腦都要送回原廠去調教?

所以,每一家打算當ISP的Cable公司,都要養為數不少的技術人員,專門到府安裝Cable Modem。加拿大最大的Rogers Cable公司,也已經開始提供Cable Internet的服務,目前還在試用階段。就目前所知,如果您簽一年約,每個月只要付\$55(加幣),如果按月付錢,則每個月是CAD\$65。這個費用已經包含Cable Modem的租金了。在第一

次安裝時,您要支付約CAD\$150-200的安裝費(視您的電腦機種而定),會有兩位技術人員到您家幫您安裝。至於Cable Internet的速度理論上可以到30M,但目前約只有下傳10M,上傳則約2M。由於Cable的線路架設結構的問題,所以當有大量用戶同時上網時,每位在下載資料的用戶,其下載速度可能會降至500K左右,但還是比目前傳統的33.6K快上許多?

最酷的一點是,由於Cable是全天24小時連著,您可以透過Internet來講Internet Phone,不必擔心ISP給您的每月時間限制超過。當有人跟您講,他用Cable來講國際電話,而且講了24小時,而每個月只要付\$55的時候,可不要訝異...:-)

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- 3. 凱訊光碟月刊(每期皆附有600MB各類程式)
- 4. 看圖例學PowerPoint (PowerPoint用戶必備)
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## 三、競爭乎

許多ISP都在想,目前我先賠一點錢,等以後再賺回來,眼光放遠嘛!無耐,長江後浪推前浪,前浪死在沙灘上...現在又多了一個Cable公司來搶生意,所提供的速度又比我們快,真是一波未平、一波又起呀!

Internet上商機無限,但稍縱即逝,就看誰的眼光對?對我們這些Internet的芸芸眾生來講,讓這些ISP去廝殺,管您們去殺得你死我活,一律

不關我的事!因為我們只對M先生負責,M先生是我們這些Internet族的最高領導統帥嘛!

## 四、結語

凡是不知道M先生是誰的讀者,歡迎來信詢問...如果您有任何批評指教,歡迎與筆者聯絡,以下是我的聯絡方式:E-Mail: jim1@iceonline.com 有興趣的讀者,可以直接連到筆者的Web Site, URL是http://www.cads.com.tw.



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## 多媒体電腦教學方法

### 今日潮流之風

### A New Way of Learning

在現今的社會,隨著個人電腦的普及化,多媒体電腦教學方法已日漸流行,為眾多專業人士所認識和使用。對一些希望知道多媒体電腦教學的朋友,可在本文章內找到一些資料。此外,本文章更為大家介紹一套最新的多媒體自學中文軟件,發音清楚準確又容易使用。專為配合今天繁忙生活的人士所需。一日一課,三十天可成。不用出門上學,也不受時間限制。多媒体自學中文軟件是現今軟件市場上具代表性佳作之一。

Interactive self-learning education is the educational wave of the future. The power of increasingly inexpensive personal computers provide impressive new educational possibilities for computers in the classroom and at home. Interactive education utilizes the personal computer to facilitate the learning process with various subjects, especially for studying language acquisition.

多媒体電腦教學是一種新教學方法——合併聲音,活潑影像和色彩鮮美圖片集合出來的結晶品——有系統和邏輯地傳達和教授新語文及智識。Many multimedia programs incorporate sound, animation, and video as well as graphics, can emulate a smart system by incorporating the capability to respond logically to preprogrammed situations. In those good multimedia programs, the user has such significant input into what functions and procedures the program performs that the program is "interactive." 一般傳統的課堂教授方式,往往受時間限制和班內人數影響,加上同學之間所產生的壓力,不少學生不能在課文上集中精神,引至學習成績不佳,弄至半途而廢。

相反來說,多媒体電腦教學能方便使用者,在他們覺得舒適的環境下學習,時間任擇,在高度自治性下學習所需要的新智識。在整個學習過程中,使用者有高度私隱權,可隨意練習和應用,直至達到滿意成績為止。

The ultimate goal of good multimedia educational programming is to involve users in a process in which they feel comfortable and from which they garner the most effective learning experience possible. Users can decide what they want to learn and how they will learn.

多媒体電腦教學方式不旦富新意,簡化學習程序,從而提高使用者對學習的興趣,給大家留下深刻印象;這種方式更能消除環境上的障礙,使用多媒体軟件的朋友可選擇在家裡或在教室中學習。由自己控制進度和選題。其效果超卓、省時間、不受地點及時空的約束,一般成功率較高。多媒体電腦教學更被認定為未來教育的一種新趨勢。Professional Interactive Chinese for Windows, Full Version, is a multimedia CD-ROM educational program that teaches Mandarin Chinese using the most contemporary language learning techniques. It incorporates graphics, animation, sound, and recording. Sound output, games, and interactive activities take Professional Interactive Chinese beyond the traditional textbook approach to Chinese language instruction. Users should expect to "interact" throughout the entire program. PIC incorporates two years of language instruction and takes students to the intermediate level on one CD-ROM. It will supplement classroom instruction or serve as a learning method on its own.

## 多媒体自學中文軟件

### 課程及功能簡介

### Professional Interactive Chinese for Windows

由一間名為Venture Tech美國公司所出品的多媒体自學中文軟件,內包含相等于兩學期的普通話課程教授;而課程內可分為三個活動區段:教學,遊戲和行政。

#### 教學區段 Teaching

使用者只需移動老鼠在按扣上,便可學習到各款新的字,文法,詞組和聲音等活動。當中更包括正確的基本單音、口腔發音、二千單字劃、聲音及語句測試和普通日常生活上的對話等。

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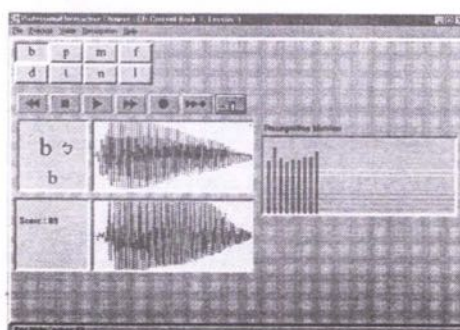
#### 行政區段 Administration

記錄個人進度和提供調換課程。多媒体自學中文軟件課程分兩部份共集合兩年教材;有四本書合共三十課。第一、二本書各有六課;第三、四本書各有九課。每完成一課,課文困難程度漸增。完成第三十課者已經有中級程度普通話。沒有中文背景的外國人士,亦可以藉多媒体自學中文軟件的幫助,有系統地學習中文。



#### Voice Animation

有圖表顯示正確的舌和唇位置



#### Phonics Drill

記錄及檢查使用者的精確單字發音



#### Speech Recognition

記錄及檢查使用者的精確語句發音

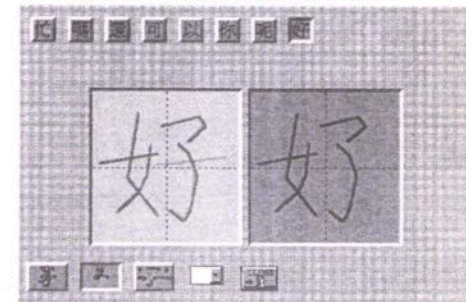


#### Writing Chinese Characters

每課介紹不同的單字,合共二千字

Professional Interactive Chinese offers its users the two different types of characters used in writing Chinese: Traditional and Simplified.

練習寫中文字方面課程內包括二種不同字型:繁體及簡體字型



Information provided by Angela Yiu of Instant Solutions' Interactive Learning Lab

多媒体自學教室

Angela can be reached at 273-0383

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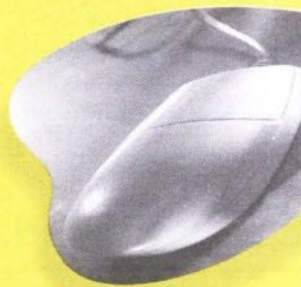
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Columns

## Netscape Navigator for OS/2 is here!



OS/2  
Ready

Kevin Linfield

Late last December, Netscape Communications Inc. and IBM made available the release version of *Netscape Navigator 2.02 for OS/2*. Fortunately for OS/2 users, this is *not* a port of the Windows version—some have even claimed it to be better than version 3.0 for Windows in some ways.

Like other versions of *Netscape Navigator*, the OS/2 version also includes powerful mail and news clients. If you are running Merlin, you can download it by double clicking on the "Get Netscape" icon on your desktop. If you are running Warp 3, use an existing Web browser to download it (and the separately available plug-in pack) from <http://www.internet.ibm.com/browsers/netscape/warp/>.

My opinion? Get it. IBM has claimed that *WebExplorer* is a "stable product" (i.e., dead), and based on my experiences, *Netscape Navigator* is a nice package that works quite well.

### Be true?

As many of you will recall, I have been unable to get my Logitech ScanMan 256 working under OS/2. With the release of OS/2 Warp 4 (Merlin) I have been partially successful in getting it working under TrueDOS (or TrapDoor as it is also called). TrueDOS involves suspending OS/2 and booting a special version of DOS, which then runs your application (in my case, a 16-bit Windows application).

The down side is twofold. First, you must use DualBoot between OS/2 and DOS (or Win95), which means using the FAT file system and installing DOS and OS/2 on your C: drive. Second, it is recommended that you save (and close) other applications (especially any that involve communications) before running a TrueDOS session.

If I run both OS/2 and real Windows 3.1 in VGA mode, everything works great. If I use higher resolutions (with my ATI Mach 32 Graphics Ultra Pro), however, TrueDOS hangs. Other users *not* using the Mach 32 video card have reported success, so it looks like my next hardware upgrade may involve a new video card also.

I'm glad that IBM has included TrueDOS, but I do wish it had undergone more testing.

If you are having problems using your scanner under OS/2 and don't want to use TrueDOS, check out <http://www.gate.net/~stidev/>

Solution Technology has released "Twain for OS/2." Working with Galleria, CopyShop/2, PMVIEW, ReView, and ColorWorks, it is claimed to take advantage of popular brand scanners including Epson, HP, Fujitsu, Logitech, Mustek, Microtek, and Kodak.

### Creative Labs backs away from OS/2

According to Creative Labs (<http://www.crea.com/wwwnew/tech/faqs/os2sup.html>), they will not be providing additional support for OS/2, although they are committed to "maintaining the current level." They blame

the lack of multimedia-system services under OS/2 and claim that "IBM has not demonstrated that they are very enthusiastic about the future of OS/2 from a consumer standpoint".

This is obviously not something we wanted to hear.

### FixPak for Merlin

Late in December, IBM announced that it was beta testing the first FixPak for OS/2 Warp 4 and that the expected release date would be during the first quarter of 1997.

You may recall that instead of issuing "Service Packs" once a year (or so), IBM now releases collections of patches and bug fixes regularly. Although it may appear to some that Service Packs are better, I prefer that IBM release whatever patches they have ASAP. With millions of different hardware combinations, no one can realistically expect a shipping product to be bug free. Keep up to date on Warp FixPaks at <http://ps.boulder.ibm.com/>

### Colour QuickCam drivers released

If you caught my QuickCam review in a previous issue, you'll know I love this "eyeball" camera. Connectix released the colour version late last year, and a third-party OS/2 developer has written drivers for it! Check out <http://www.shadow.net/~senja/qv2.htm> or e-mail [senja@shadow.net](mailto:senja@shadow.net) for additional information.

### Tip of the Month

I'd like to thank faithful OS/2 Ready reader [jrwolff@erols.com](mailto:jrwolff@erols.com) for submitting this tip.

With the release of OS/2 Warp V4, the enhanced editor (EPM) now contains HTML tag capabilities. To activate them, pull down the "Command" menu and select "Command Dialog." Enter "link htmltags" (no quotes) and press ENTER. Now check your menu bar—a new item called "HTML" will appear, and clicking on this menu item provides the Warp user with a number of key tags for HTML programming.

Prior to Merlin, this feature was a free add-on to EPM, so if you are still using OS/2 version 3, you can download the HTML add-ons from my freeware page or from Hobbes in the [/os2/editor](#) directory.

### Freeware of the Month

OS/2 users have had a hard time benchmarking their OS/2 systems, as the most popular benchmark utilities appear to come in Windows-only flavour. After upgrading my own hardware, I scoured Hobbes for a complete (and free!) utility that would let me compare my upgrade path. Sysbench (current version 0.91c) will test your video, hard drive (and controller card), CPU (both floating point and integer), and memory. Available free from the Internet FTP site [hobbes.nmsu.edu](http://hobbes.nmsu.edu), it is located as [/os2/wpsutil/SYSB091C.ZIP](#)

Kevin Linfield is a consultant and freelance writer. He can be reached via e-mail at [linfield@torfree.net](mailto:linfield@torfree.net) ♦



# Millennial anxiety



**Mac Rant**

David Rosen

From the early-morning darkness, he pulled into the light of a street lamp just long enough for me to recognize the car. I flashed my headlights twice; the dark sedan slowly pulled opposite my rental car, police style, with the other car's driver's side door next to mine. The engines of both cars continued running. The tinted window slowly slid down.

"What's new?" I asked. The situation called for little small talk.

"Lots of stuff. And the millennium is coming." I concentrated on his first sentence. "Yeah, like what?"

"The new operating system—you've heard about it, right? We had a few bucks saved for the holidays and we thought well, why not have a party?"

## Apple's new OS

The new operating system was called Rhapsody, half-NeXT and half-Apple. It was the result of the pre-Christmas announcement that Apple had purchased NeXT Software, lock, stock, and barrel, for US\$400 million. Pending

regulatory approvals, all NeXT products, services, and technology will become part of Apple. As part of the agreement, Steve Jobs, chairman and CEO of NeXT, will return to Apple—the company he co-founded in 1976—reporting to Gil Amelio, Apple's chairman and CEO.

Apple has had lots of problems upgrading its operating system over the past few years. Successive deadlines for System 8—code named Copland—had come and gone and there was still no new OS. Buying NeXT was considered a handling of the Copland problem. "And when is this supposed to happen?" I asked.

"Apple plans to get Rhapsody in developers' hands by the end of this year and to customers within a year after that. The company is promising the new OS will run on current and future Macs. As well, Development tells me that Rhapsody will have an emulation mode that allows most Mac applications to run under the new OS."

"Cool," I said in my most Valleyesque voice. "But realistically, customers aren't going to wait for two years, are they?"

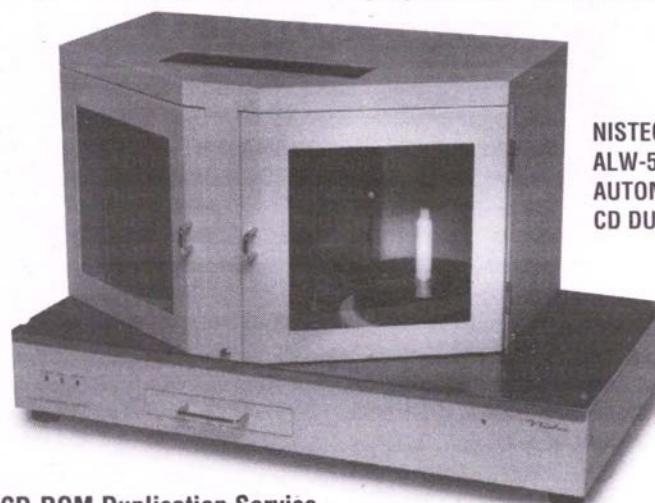
"Yeah, I know. That's why Hancock says Apple's going to make the transition as painless as possible by continually upgrading System 7, for five to ten years." Hancock, of course, was Apple's chief technical officer,

continued on page 58

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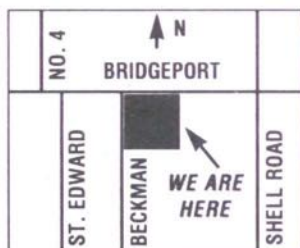
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## Columns

### Millennial anxiety...

continued from page 57

Ellen Hancock, a long-time veteran of IBM's mainframe business who had come to Apple a year ago.

"The first upgrade, called Harmony, is due later this month," he continued. "And a second, dubbed Tempo, is set for release in July. Two more are planned for 1998."

There was a pause.

"It's just another piece of the millennium puzzle" the shadowy figure remarked.

### Claris FileMaker Pro update

Once again, I ignored the millennium comment. "I hear Claris just released some cross-platform updates for FileMaker Pro."

"Well, as best as I can tell, it's just a maintenance release of FileMaker Pro. You know, a few new features and a few bug fixes. You can download the update from Claris' ftp site or from the commercial service providers such as America Online (Keyword: Claris) and CompuServe (Go MacClaris). The updater is available on disk by calling 1-800-544-8554."

"But it doesn't matter, since it will all be over soon," he added while I was scribbling all this information down in my notebook.

"Why is that?" I asked without thinking.

"I've told you...because the millennium is coming. We have to be ready."

"What the heck are you talking about?"

Maybe it was the early hours, but I wasn't following the conversation anymore.

"It's all in the Bible. Revelations, of course."

"Revelations?" Suddenly I realized we were

about to have one of those wacko conspiracy conversations.

"You've heard all the jokes about Bill Gates being the Anti-Christ. You know, under that geeky exterior, controlling everything. Well, suppose Steve Jobs is the real Messiah, sent to lead us back on the straight and narrow. Everyone knows there's going to be a big OS battle. Maybe it's going to be bigger than we all think."

I stared straight ahead thinking this guy had lost it. Maybe that's what happens when one works too hard for too many years. He mistook my silence for encouragement.

"And all the PR about the Year 2000 problem. You know, it's supposed to melt down many of the world's computer systems because they can't handle the two-digit '00' date field. What about all those Web sites on the Internet dedicated to the Millennium man, there's even a TV show on Fox called 'Millennium'."

"Yeah, but it's on Fox," I tried joking.

"All of pieces of the puzzle are falling into place," he insisted.

"Listen, it's getting late and I'm on deadline," I explained, trying to get away.

"Rumor is that during the Rapture, Microsoft's tech lines will be fully staffed."

And with that, I sped away into the early morning fog of Silicon Valley, shaking my head.

You don't have to wait for late-night meetings in deserted parking lots to get the news about Apple. Send your questions and comments to MacRant@aol.com. Please note that due to the volume of mail, individual questions cannot be answered. Incoherent ramblings about the millennium will be ignored. ♦

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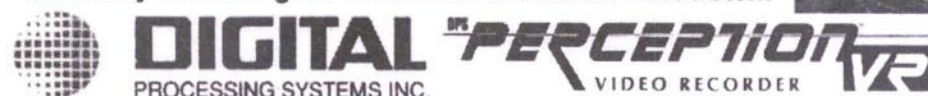


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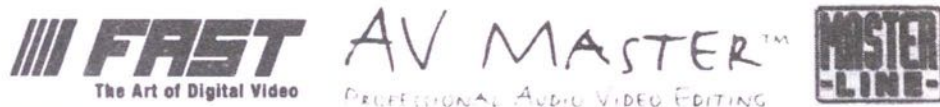


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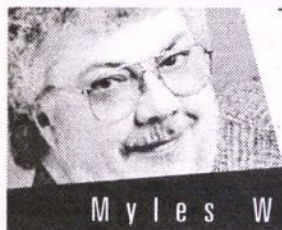
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## Pros

The arguments for cookies come from people interested in the commercialization of the Internet and how *you* use it. For example:

- Allowing you to log into a subscription site without having to re-enter your user ID and password each time. Each will likely be stored in a clearly visible text file on your hard drive where anyone can find them.
- Allowing you to visit an electronic "shopping mall," start assembling a list of products, then pick up later if you're interrupted with the goods still logged into your "shopping basket." Your credit card number could also be stored.
- Allowing site operators to custom design a site

for you, based on your past visits. If you visit an online magazine and chose topic- or application-specific news items, ads may be tailored to your choices or certain news items may be moved to the top of the selection list. This also allows the Microsoft and Netscape "Home" sites to let you custom-design a startup page.

- Allowing site operators to make pages more accessible. If it takes five clicks to visit a page and lots of people do it, the path to it may be shortened.
- Allowing site operators to find dead ends. Aside from recording where you've gone, cookies can also record when you left.
- Allowing site operators to tailor sites for specific browsers. Cookies can report you're using *Internet Explorer*, *Navigator*, or something else.
- Allowing advertisers to count individual "hits" on a site, instead of the result of someone hitting the "reload" button 50 times.
- Allowing advertisers to discover where you were last before logging into their site so they can suitably reward whomever had their link.
- Allowing electronic publishers to set payment for writers based on the number of hits on an article.
- Allowing corporations to track employee use of the Web to prevent non-productive time spent visiting questionable sites.

## Cons

There are many individuals and organizations deeply concerned that cookie technology represents an attack on your privacy. For example:

- A bug in some earlier versions of *Netscape*, as well as some flaws in early versions of Java, allowed some applications to store and transmit far more

data than anyone on the Web had a right to know, including your name, contents of your hard drive(s), and more.

- Companies such as Focalink, GlobalTrak, and DoubleClick brag about the psychological profiles they're gathering on Internet users to make more effective use of commercial Web sites. You don't have to visit their sites; many of the advertising banners supplied to other sites you visit are linked to their databases (and I found cookies for all of them on my hard drive).
- Without your knowledge, you may find your e-mailbox deluged with direct advertising campaigns. Have you been getting mysterious messages and wondering how your e-mail address got to the originator?
- Cookies can be used as weapons. Try <http://www.microsoft.com/> or <http://www.msn.com/> using *Navigator*. Assuming the site loads before next week, refuse to allow any cookies offered (see below) and watch what happens.

## Who, me?

Although developed by Netscape (and supported in versions of *Navigator* as early as 2.x) and supported and augmented in Sun Microsystems' Java, cookies are also supported by Microsoft's *Internet Explorer 3.x*, as well as by other Internet browsers. To find out if your browser supports cookies, go to [www.research.digital.com/nsl/formtest/stats-by-test/NetscapeCookie.html](http://www.research.digital.com/nsl/formtest/stats-by-test/NetscapeCookie.html) and find it on the list.

Version 3.x of both *Netscape Navigator* and *Microsoft Internet Explorer* give you specific tools to block cookies from your system. Here's how:

In *Netscape Navigator 3.x*:

1. Under the Options menu, choose Network Preferences.
2. Select the Protocols tab.
3. Click on the Accepting a Cookie checkbox, under Warn Before..., and hit OK.

In *Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.x*:

1. Under the View menu, choose Options.
2. Select the Advanced tab.
3. Click on the Warn Before Accepting Cookies checkbox, and hit OK.

Any time you visit a site offering a cookie, you'll be notified with a pop-up window and asked whether you want to accept it. And that brings us back to being fed up.

The extra time it takes to cancel cookie requests is spoiling my Web experiences and they're mostly unnecessary. For a chilling example of how much data can be collected from you even without a cookie, visit <http://www.anonymizer.com/> and offer them the opportunity to show you how much they can find out about you.

And the next time you hear executives from Netscape, Oracle, and Sun talk about how they want to blow Microsoft out of the water, remember who started all this and ask yourself whether they'd actually make the world a better place if they were in charge.

Associate editor Myles White writes a weekly column in the Fast Forward section of the *Toronto Star* and is author of *How to Buy a Computer*, published by McClelland and Stewart. You can reach him at [myles@direct.com](mailto:myles@direct.com), his Web site (which does not set cookies) at <http://web.idirect.com/~myles>, and by fax at (416) 425-4644. ♦



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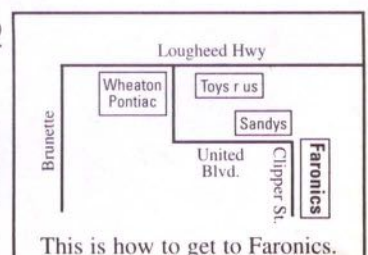
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